

Lincoln Sarah Bush Johnston  
[materials formerly in binder — clippings  
rearranged by date]

Drawer 1

Stepmother - Sarah Lincoln  
Folder 1

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# Thomas Lincoln Family

Sarah Bush Johnston  
Lincoln

Folder 1

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor.  
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

No. 213

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

May 8, 1933

## LINCOLN'S HONORED STEPMOTHER

The annual observance of Mother's Day has a tendency to cultivate an interest in the maternal influence exerted over famous men. Abraham Lincoln was fortunate in having a double portion of motherly attention as both his own mother and his stepmother had a share in his early training.

While it is very natural that Nancy Hanks Lincoln should contribute much to her son's welfare, it is rather unusual to find a stepmother as keenly interested in a stepchild as Sarah Bush was in Abraham Lincoln. A brief history of her life up to the year when Lincoln moved out from under her influence in 1830 is especially timely at this season of the year.

The Bush family was of German descent, and, according to one who knew the pioneer Bush well, he was a "stirring industrious man." On August 6, 1781, he entered two hundred acres of land including a mill site in what later became Hardin County, Kentucky.

### *Sarah's Girlhood Days*

Sarah Bush was born near Elizabethtown, Kentucky, on December 13, 1788. She was the youngest daughter of Christopher Bush, his family comprising six boys and three girls. It is likely that Thomas Lincoln first saw Sarah Bush in 1797 when he went to work in Elizabethtown and remained there a year or more. As Sarah was but nine years old at this time and Thomas had just become of age, it is not likely that he took much notice of her.

When Thomas Lincoln returned to Elizabethtown in 1803 Sarah was fifteen years old, and at the time Thomas became associated with Christopher Bush in 1806 as a patroller in his company, Sarah was approaching the age of eighteen. There is no question but what he was often in her home and it is likely that he may have paid her some attention. There is a tradition to the effect that she spurned Thomas Lincoln's advances and rejected him for another suitor.

Whatever truth there may be about the rejection of Thomas Lincoln by Sarah Bush at the termination of their early courtship, it is very evident that she made a very serious mistake in appraising the worth of the two contestants for her hand.

### *The Jailor's Wife*

Daniel Johnston, whom Sarah married on March 13, 1806, apparently was unable to write, and the Hardin County Commissioner's books do not show that he ever owned any property but one horse. He was placed on the delinquent list for not paying poll tax. He borrowed money from his wife's brothers and they sued him to try and recover it. An endorsement on the bill "without funds" shows the circumstances in which Sarah Johnston was

living. In 1814 Johnston was appointed jailor of the county, but he was obliged to secure six men to go on his bond when usually two were sufficient. None of his brothers-in-law appeared as bondsmen.

It is evident that the large part of the jailor's work fell on his wife, who was obliged to get meals for the prisoners, clean the court house, and do other tasks that would be anything but agreeable. The salary which Johnston received as jailor for the year between October 1814 and October 1815 was twenty-three pounds and five shillings, approximately \$100.00, or about thirty cents a day. Johnston was expected to provide fuel and lights out of his annual consideration.

The jail at Elizabethtown was a stone structure of two stories and the jailor's family lived in a room above the jail. The youngest child of Sarah Bush Johnston, John D., was born here. Two daughters, Elizabeth and Matilda, were also born in Elizabethtown.

### *The Widow Johnston*

Daniel Johnston died as early as July, 1816, but the exact date is not known. The sequel to this first matrimonial venture of Sarah Johnston is found in an order in the county court in which an executor of the estate is appointed, "the widow of Daniel Johnston, deceased, having in open court declared that she refused to take upon herself the burden of said administration."

Sarah Johnston's father made his will in 1812 and it was probated on February 8, 1813. The will indicates that previous to this time Sarah Bush Johnston had received her share of the estate. After the death of her husband Sarah purchased from Samuel Haycraft, for the sum of twenty-five dollars, "the lot with the cabin in which she now lives," just outside the town limits of Elizabethtown. Here, according to Mr. Haycraft, "she lived an honest, poor widow." With three children dependent upon her and what little she had received from her father's estate already gone, we can feel sure she was in very humble circumstances.

### *The Second Wedding*

Sarah Johnston had been a widow three years when the widower, Thomas Lincoln, arrived in Elizabethtown and began his second courtship. It was in Elizabethtown where Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks Lincoln had gone to keeping house and where they lived for the first two years of their married life. The widow had every opportunity to know all about this man who had left Kentucky for Indiana but three years before and who had now come back a widower suing for her hand.

The wedding of Thomas Lincoln and Sarah Bush Johnston was solemnized at Elizabethtown, Kentucky, on December 2, 1819, by Rev. George L. Rogers, and immediate preparations were

made for the removal to Indiana. Previous to the wedding, tradition claims that Thomas Lincoln paid off several small debts which Sarah had incurred during her widowhood.

If one will study the surroundings of Sarah Bush Johnston both during her marriage to Johnston and the years that followed, he will be convinced that it was she rather than Thomas Lincoln who profited most economically through this union. She had every reason to look back on this union as the dawning of a new and better day for her and it must have been partly out of appreciation to Thomas Lincoln that she became such a sympathetic mother to his children.

### *The Stepmother*

The new cabin home over which Sarah now presided consisted of three orphan groups, and we might say she adapted herself to the task of serving as a matron in this cabin orphanage greatly to her credit. There were the two Lincoln orphans, Sarah and Abraham; the three Johnston orphans, Elizabeth, Matilda, and John D.; and another orphan boy, Dennis Hanks, whose foster parents had died at the same time Nancy Hanks Lincoln passed away.

The new Mrs. Lincoln was but thirty-one years of age when she took charge of these orphan groups. Her husband was twelve years her senior. Abraham Lincoln had now reached the age of ten and from this time until he was twenty-one he was under his stepmother's direction continually. As Sarah Bush was noted for her "sprightliness and industry," there is every reason to believe that her cabin home was kept clean and tidy and that the Lincoln children profited greatly by her oversight of the home that had been without a woman in it for more than a year.

Apparently the most valuable contribution which the new Mrs. Lincoln made to Stepson Abraham was her sympathetic attitude towards his ambition to learn. Having lived all her life in a community where there was a very fine academy and having come in contact continually with educated people she would be quick to encourage any ambition which Abraham had to make an educated man of himself.

This statement credited to her is undoubtedly true, "I induced my husband to permit Abe to read and study at home as well as at school. At first he was not easily reconciled to it but finally he too seemed willing to encourage him to a certain extent. . . . We took particular care not to disturb him—would let him read on and on until he quit of his own accord."

What contributions Sarah Bush Lincoln made to Abraham Lincoln were made before he left her home at twenty-one years of age, and we have his own testimony that she was a good mother to him.



# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor,  
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 526

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

May 8, 1939

## THREE LINCOLN MOTHERS

Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, will receive proper recognition on Sunday, May 14, when the annual pilgrimage to her grave is made by the Boy Scout troops of Southern Indiana. Lincoln's stepmother, Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln, will also be honored by the wide distribution of an inspirational picture of the last visit which her illustrious stepson paid her. But the third Lincoln mother, Mary Todd Lincoln, the mother of Abraham Lincoln's own children, will hardly be given a thought on the second Sunday in May.

### Nancy

Lincoln's own mother was once despised and censured by most of those who wrote about her. She has now emerged from the purely traditional and misty background which made her a waif and an irresponsible wanderer to an honorable place in the family history of her noble son. This has only come about by the untiring efforts of several historians who were not willing to allow her place in history to become established by the gossip about her collected by William Herndon.

This mother had the privilege of tutoring her son, Abraham, but nine short years before she was snatched away. She was a young mother just in her early twenties when her first child, Sarah, was born. Two years later Abraham came and then after another two years a child named Thomas for his father. The youngest boy died when about two years old so there were but two children left for the mother to care for, an easy task compared with the lot of so many pioneer mothers with large families.

When Nancy Hanks Lincoln moved with her husband to Elizabethtown, Kentucky immediately after her wedding, there is every reason to believe that she found a close friend in a young lady of the town, Sarah Bush Johnston, who had been married but a few weeks before. Nancy Lincoln's first child and Sarah Johnston's first child were born about the same time. In the rearing of these infants the young mothers would have much in common to discuss. Little did Nancy Lincoln dream at this time that her friend Sarah Johnston would become the stepmother of her children.

### Sarah

The brother of Sarah Bush, Elijah, and Thomas Lincoln were very close friends in the early Kentucky days and they made a trip to New Orleans together in 1806. While they were away on the trip Sarah, but eighteen years old, married Daniel Johnston. When Thomas and Elijah returned, both purchased gifts for Sarah at the Bleakley and Montgomery Store.

Thomas Lincoln as a young man had received the appointment as a patroler for Hardin County as early as 1803 and Sarah's father, Christopher Bush, was captain of the patrol. Thomas must have met Sarah who was then but fifteen years old, and he had probably known her as a growing child as she was but nine years of age when he first went to Elizabethtown to work.

Nancy, Thomas Lincoln's first wife, died in 1818 and on the following year he went back to Elizabethtown to marry a second wife. He chose the woman whom he had known from his childhood, Sarah Bush Johnston, then a widow. Abraham Lincoln's second mother or stepmother was even younger than his own mother.

After the marriage Sarah immediately became the mother for three orphaned groups, her own three children, Thomas Lincoln's two children, and a boy by the name of Dennis Hanks whose foster parents were dead and who therefore found lodging in the Lincoln home. It was no small task to mother three groups of children, yet she played no favorites in this Southern Indiana orphanage.

No stepmother could have shown more kindness in

bringing up a child than Sarah displayed in her rearing of Abraham Lincoln. She was richly rewarded for her motherly attention to the needs of this boy, as in her last years he was to establish her in a home which he had provided for her.

### Mary

Certainly the name Mary is not a bad name for a mother and there is no evidence that Mary Lincoln was other than a good mother for Abraham Lincoln's four boys. She brought them all through the difficult years of early infancy and three of them passed from the period of childhood to youth.

When Mary Todd married Abraham Lincoln she was but twenty-four years of age while her husband was nine years her senior. No one in Springfield has even ventured the suggestion that she was not a capable mother in every respect. She was the intellectual superior to most of the mothers of the prairie country. She had always lived in a home of culture. There had always been new babies coming into the Todd home in Lexington during all the years she was growing up, and she must have known more than the average woman about rearing children.

Mary Todd was a good mother in that she kept her own mind alert and was of tremendous help in bringing at least one of her sons to occupy a prominent place in government affairs, and the possibilities are that if Robert Lincoln had permitted his name to be used as a Presidential nominee she might have reared a President as well as married one.

Mary Lincoln of course never knew her husband's own mother because she died the very year Mary was born. She did know Lincoln's stepmother, and a letter which she wrote to her, a copy of which was discovered in Charleston, Illinois several years ago, might suggest the attitude towards the good woman who took care of Lincoln as a youth by the good wife who mothered his children when he became a man.

"Private

"Chicago, Dec. 19th, 67

"Mrs. Sally Lincoln

"My dear Madam:

"In memory of the dearly loved one, who always remembered you with so much affection, will you not do me the favor of accepting these few trifles? God has been very merciful to you, in prolonging your life and I trust your health has also been preserved.—In my great agony of mind I cannot trust myself to write about, what so entirely fills my thoughts, my darling husband; knowing how well you loved him also, is a grateful satisfaction to me. Believe me, dear Madam, if I can ever be of any service to you, in *any respect*, I am entirely in your service. My husband a few weeks before his death mentioned to me, that he intended that summer, paying proper respect to his father's grave, by a head and foot stone, with his name age and so forth and I propose very soon carrying out his intentions. It was not from want of affection for his father, as you are well aware that it was not done, but his time was so greatly occupied always. I will be pleased to learn whether this package was received by you—Perhaps you know that our youngest boy, is named for your husband, Thomas Lincoln, this child, the idol of his father—I am blessed in both of my sons, they are very good and noble. The eldest is growing very much like his own dear father. I am a deeply afflicted woman and hope you will pray for me—

"I am, my dear

Madam,

"Affectionately yours,

"Mary Lincoln.

"This letter please consider entirely private—I shall be greatly pleased to hear from you."



-----  
September Term 1802 Tuesday the 28th  
Ninian Edwards Plaintiff  
vs  
Christopher Bush Defendant

In trespass assault and battery a  
and false imprisonment.

This day came the parties aforesaid by thier attorneys  
and thereupon the motion of the plaintiff by his attorney, and for  
reasons appearing to the court, it is ordered that the office dismission  
herein awarded in the clerks office be set aside and that this suit  
be again set on the rule docket for further proceedings to be heard  
thereon.  
Hardin Quarter Session Court Page 371

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September Term 1802  
Friday the first day of October

Ordered that it be certified to the auditor of public  
accounts, that Christopher Bush is allowed ~~threexdays~~ for three  
days, for a charge as constable in arresting Ninian Edwards, charged  
with felony, also that he is ~~threexdays~~ allowed  
for two days for arresting Elizabeth Shaw, charged with felony.

HARDIN QUARTER SESSION COURT PAGE 373

Friday 22 November 1803

The sherriff having agreeable to the direction of the court  
hired negro Pemberton, a negro fellow who was committed to the jail  
of this county, as a runaway and whose time was expired with  
Christopher Bush. to whom he was last hired to by order of the court  
court returned that he had cried off said negro to James Percifull  
for the term of twelve months for the sum of forty eight dollars  
and twenty five cents.

H.C.C. Order Book A p.433

October Term 1803 Wednesday the 19th

Isaac Bush , Plaintiff

vs  
Bennom Shaw & Sarah his wife Defendants

In trespass assault & battery

This day came the parties aforesaid and by thier attourneys  
and thereupon came also a jury to wit; Joseph Kirkpatrick, Greenbery  
Dorsey, Thomas Lincoln, John Smoot, Conrad Walters, John Alexander,  
Vincen Dunn, Daniel Wade, Daniel Holman, Samuel Watkins, Samuel Larue  
and Samuel Wright, who being elewted tried and sworn to speak the truth,  
on the issue joined upon thier oath do say that the asault and battery  
in the declartion mentioned was the proper asault of the defendant Sarah  
without any such cause as in pleading they have alleged, and they do  
assess the plaintiff damage by occasion thereof to one penny besides  
his costs. Therefore it is considered by the court that the Plaitiff  
recover against the defendants, the damages aforesaid in form aforesaid,  
assessed, and also his costs by him about his suit in this behalf expended  
and the said sefendants may be taken.

Hardin Quarter Session Court Page 438

Law

MARCH TERM 1805

Isaac Bush is this day appointed Jailer of this County whereupon he took the oath of Jailer, and entered into bond with Christopher Bush his security in the penalty of one thousand dollars  
H County Court Order book B page 13

MAY TERM 1805

Ordered that Christopher Bush Samuel Bush Richard May John Johnson Thomas Swan Jacob Linder and Charles Helm be and they are hereby appointed Patrolers in the northwardly district of this County & the said Christopher Bush is appointed Captain of said Patrolers  
H. County Court Order Book B page 17

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Tuesday Nov 25, 1805

Friday, 23 November, 1803

The sherriff having agreeable to the direction of the court hired negro Pemberton, a negro fellow who was committed to the jail of this county, as a runaway and whose time was expired with Christopher Bush, to whom he was last hired to by order of the court returned that he had cried off said negro to James Perci full for the term of twelve months for the sum of forty eight dollars and twenty five cents.

H.C.C. Order Book A 1.133

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October 29, 1806

Grand Jury Indictments

" Also the Honorable Judge Henry P. Brodneaux for profanely swearing on the twenty sixth day of the present month by uttering the words 'My God'."

"Christopher Bush for profane swearing ..."

"William Hanks is hereby summoned ~~xxxxxxx~~ to appear before grand jury to give testimony."

Circuit

Book B page 410  
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Tuesday Nov 25, 1808

The persons appointed to let the building of a jail that they had fixed a plan and let the same to the lowest bidder, and Charles Helm became the undertaker at \$3455. ....  
H.C.C. Order Book B. p 130

NOVEMBER 14th 1814

Daniel Johnston is appointed Jailor of Hardin County whereupon he took the oaths required by law and entered into and acknowledged his bonds in the penalty of one thousand dollars conditioned as the law directs with John Sneed, Jackson Hedges, Patrick Mirvin, Stephen Hawlings, William Stelcer and Cornelius Rings his securities  
H.C.C.

Order Book C page 192

JANUARY 9th 1815

Ordered that Daniel Johnston Jailor of Hardin County do deliver to Benjamin Helm clerk of this court the keys of the court house upon his requesting thier delivery.

H.C.C. Order Book C page 302

TUESDAY OCTOBER 10th 1815

To Daniel Johnston for his services as jailor of Hardin County from October 1814 to this time, wood and other articles furnished for the court as per account files 23.50.0

H.C.C. Order Book C page 366

Tuesday OCTOBER 10th 1815

Ordered that Daniel Johnston remove the whipping posts from the place where they now stand to the jail lot and that he exhibit his account to the next court of claims.

H.C.C. Order Book C page 367

MONDAY 8th of July 1816

Ordered that John Haywood be and he is hereby appointed Jailor of Hardin County in place of Daniel Johnston, deceased whereupon he entered into and acknowledged his bond with Charles Helm, Robert Slaughter and Hardin Thomas his securities in the penalty of one thousand dollars conditioned as the law directs after having taken the oaths prescribed by law.

H.C.C. Order Book C page 215

MONDAY 14th April 1817

On motion of Matthew M. Cully who took the oath required by law and together with William Parrees his security entered into and acknowledged bond in the penalty of one hundred dollars the administration of the estate of Daniel Johnson deceased is granted him, the widow of Daniel Johnson deceased having in open court declared that she refused to take upon her self the burden of the said administration

DANIEL Johnson Allowance

H.C.C. Order Book C page 368

The Commonwealth of Kentucky  
March Term to Daniel Johnson dr.

To 6 days attendance	\$ 8.00
To furnishing fuel	\$ 6.00
furnishing candles	32 1/2
	\$13.37 1/2



# THE SATURDAY EVENING POST



REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

**FOUNDED A. D. 1728**

**GEORGE HORACE LORIMER**

*Editor 1899 to 1937*

**PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY**

**THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY**

**INDEPENDENCE SQUARE**

**PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, U. S. A.**

**WESLEY WINANS STOUT, EDITOR**

**A. W. NEALL, E. N. BRANDT, RICHARD THRUENSEN,  
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**PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 17, 1940**

**E**XCESSIVE partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike for another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil, and even second, the arts of influence on the other.—*From President Washington's Farewell Address.*

## *Lincoln Had a Stepbrother*

**N**OW that Abraham Lincoln has been adopted by both the New Deal and the American Communist party as a patron saint, it is time to recall the story of John D. Johnston, his amiable and shiftless stepbrother.

Abraham was ten when his father went back to Elizabethtown, Kentucky, and married Sarah Bush Johnston, whom he had courted unsuccessfully in his youth. From the day in 1819 that the second wife and her son and two daughters reached Tom Lincoln's floorless, windowless, doorless and dirty cabin on Pigeon Creek, Indiana, and found his son and daughter half-naked and half-frozen, Abraham Lincoln loved his stepmother dearly, and she him. Her children became as his own brother and sisters.

In 1830 Tom Lincoln followed John Hanks to Illinois, settling—if Tom Lincoln ever settled—on the Sangamon River and building a cabin of logs Hanks already had cut. The following spring Abraham, John Johnston, John Hanks and Denton Offutt

value. Johnston promptly assigned this bond to a buyer for "fifty dollars paid in hand."

Lincoln sent money often to his stepmother, went back to see her at the close of the Black Hawk War, visited the farm whenever he was in the neighborhood while riding the circuit—"hard cash and warm heart-care," in the words of his partner, William H. Herndon. Again in Herndon's words, Abraham Lincoln had none of "the avarice of get," yet was a prudent steward of what he did get.

All this is necessary to the understanding of two letters written by him to his stepbrother, soon after Thomas Lincoln's death in 1851. The first follows:

*DEAR JOHNSTON:* Your request for eighty dollars, I do not think it best to comply with now. At the various times when I have helped you a little, you have said to me, "We can get along very well now;" but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now, this can only happen by some defect in your conduct. What that defect is, I think I know. You are not *lazy*, and still you are an *idler*. I doubt whether, since I saw you, you have done a good whole day's work in any one day. You do not very much dislike to work, and still you do not work much, merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; and it is vastly important to you, and still more so to your children, that you should break the habit. It is more important to them, because they have longer to live, and can keep out of an idle habit before they are in it easier than they can get out after they are in.

You are now in need of some money; and what I propose is, that you shall go to work, "tooth and nail," for somebody who will give you money for it. Let father and your boys take charge of things at home, prepare for a crop, and make the crop, and you go to work for the best money-wages, or in discharge of any debt you owe, that you can get; and, to secure you a fair reward for your labor, I now promise you, that, for every dollar you will, between this and the first of next May, get for your own labor, either in money or as your own indebtedness, I will then give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean you shall go off to St. Louis, or the lead-mines, or the gold-mines in California; but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home, in Cole's County. Now, if you will do this, you will be soon out of debt, and, what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again. But, if I should now clear you out of debt, next year you would be just as deep in as ever. You say you would almost give your place in heaven for \$70 or \$80. Then you value your place in heaven very cheap; for I am sure you can, with the offer I make, get the seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months' work. You say, if I will furnish you the money, you will deed me the land, and, if you don't pay the money back, you will deliver possession. Nonsense! If you can't now live with the land, how will you then live without it? You have always been kind to me, and I do not mean to be unkind to you. On the contrary, if you will but follow my advice, you will find it worth more than eighty times eighty dollars to you.

Affectionately your brother,

A. LINCOLN

That John found the bargain distasteful is evidenced by another letter Lincoln wrote him, on November 4, 1851:



floated a flatboat and cargo to New Orleans. Abe refused to go unless his stepbrother should be taken along by Offutt. When they returned, Abe struck out for himself. John Johnston stayed on with his mother and stepfather as long as he lived. He had been born tired, and tired he remained.

After Abe had left home, Tom Lincoln moved three times in search of a "healthy location," dying at seventy-three on a forty-acre tract near Goose Nest Prairie, Coles County, Illinois. This he had mortgaged to the school commissioners for \$200—its full value. Abe paid off the mortgage in 1841, when his resources were slender, and took a deed, reserving a life interest to his father and stepmother. At the same time he bound himself to convey the land to John Johnston after the death of the elder Lincolns for \$200. however much the land might appreciate in

of foolery. I feel that it is so even on your own account, and particularly on *mother's* account. The eastern forty acres I intend to keep for mother while she lives: if you *will not cultivate it*, it will rent for enough to support her; at least, it will rent for something. Her dower in the other two forties she can let you have, and no thanks to me. Now, do not misunderstand this letter: I do not write it in any unkindness. I write it in order, if possible, to get you to *face* the truth, which truth is, you are destitute because you have idled away all your time. Your thousand pretences for not getting along better are all nonsense: they deceive nobody but yourself. *Go to work* is the only cure for your case.

A word to mother. Chapman tells me he wants you to go and live with him. If I were you, I would try it a while. If you get tired of it (as I think you will not), you can return to your own home. Chapman feels very kindly to you; and I have no doubt he will make your situation very pleasant.

Sincerely your son,  
A. LINCOLN

Dennis Hanks, cousin of Lincoln, brother-in-law of Johnston, once was asked: "Did Abraham Lincoln treat John D. Johnston well?"

Dennis' testimony is not highly regarded by historians, but he may be trusted on this: "I will say this much about it. I think Abe done more for John than he deserved. John thought Abe did not do enough for the old people. They became enemies a while on this ground. I don't want to tell all the things that I know; it would not look well in history. I say this: Abe treated John well."

"What kind of a man was Johnston?" Hanks was asked. "I say this much: A kinder-hearted man never was in Coles County, Illinois, nor an honest man. . . . John did not love to work any the best."

Ward Lamon, one of the earliest of Lincoln's biographers, described Johnston: "He had no positive vice except idleness, and no special virtue but good temper. He was not a fortunate man; never made money, was always needy and always clamoring for the aid of his friends. Mr. Lincoln, all through John's life, had much trouble to keep him on his legs, and succeeded indifferently in all his attempts."

There was a third letter, on November 9, 1851; if there were others, they have been lost. Johnston died about the time of Lincoln's election. His mother lived on. Lincoln's deep affection for her is best testified to by the fact that in February, 1861, before leaving Springfield for his inauguration, he made an arduous trip especially to see her. Witnesses have

DEAR BROTHER: When I came into Charleston day before yesterday, I learned that you are anxious to sell the land where you live, and move to Missouri. I have been thinking of this ever since, and cannot but think such a notion is utterly foolish. What can you do in Missouri better than here? Is the land any richer? Can you there, any more than here, raise corn and wheat and oats without work? Will anybody there, any more than here, do your work for you? If you intend to go to work, there is no better place than right where you are: if you do not intend to go to work, you cannot get along anywhere. Squirming and crawling about from place to place can do no good. You have raised no crop this year; and what you really want is to sell the land, get the money, and spend it. Part with the land you have, and, my life upon it, you will never after own a spot big enough to bury you in. Half you will get for the land you will spend in moving to Missouri, and the other half you will eat and drink and wear out, and no foot of land will be bought. Now, I feel it is my duty to have no hand in such a piece

described their touching greeting and parting. The old lady who had been more than mother to the President-elect told him that she feared she never should see him again; that his enemies would kill him—a fear not uncommon among Lincoln's neighbors. She lived to see this foreboding borne out.

Sarah Lincoln was among the first to be interviewed by the indefatigable Herndon. She still was on the farm on September 8, 1865. At first her mind seemed clouded, but Herndon persisted and eventually, at one of his questions, "she awoke as it were a new being," he wrote, and talked volubly of her stepson's boyhood.

"Abe was a good boy," she told him. "I can say what scarcely one woman, a mother, can say in a thousand; it is this: Abe never gave me a cross word or look and never refused in fact, or even in appearance, to do anything I asked." As Herndon left, she wept and said: "Good-by, my good son's friend, farewell."

Environment or heredity? If Thomas Lincoln was, in fact, the father of Abraham, and Nancy Hanks his mother, then John D. Johnston's heredity, by such evidence as remains, was a good deal superior to Abraham Lincoln's. Their environment was identical from 1819 until Lincoln came of age. Prior to 1819, Johnston's environment easily was the better. Yet it was Johnston who might have been the shiftless, roving Tom Lincoln's boy.

Now that the Marxists have made Abraham Lincoln their own, will they give us the economic interpretation of John D. Johnston and his stepbrother?



Here, according to this same Samuel Haycraft, "she lived an honest poor widow," until her marriage to Thomas Lincoln.

When Nancy Hanks Lincoln succumbed to the "Milk Sickness," in the month of October 1818, at the Pigeon Creek home, Spencer County, Indiana, there survived her; the widower, a daughter, and a son. There also came into this stricken home at this time another orphan whose foster parents had been claimed by the same disease. Here in the Wilderness we find an eleven year old girl attempting to mother a younger brother, and keep house for her father and an orphan boy older than herself. It was not long before the widower, Thomas Lincoln, began to realize that his children were being neglected, and that their greatest need was a mother.

Thomas remembered that when he left Kentucky, his old sweetheart was then a widow with three children. One year and two months after the death of Nancy he set out for Elizabethtown and again became suitor for the hand of Sarah. Squire Bush her nephew recited for me the story of his wooing, and the acceptance of his proposal. He said that Lincoln arrived in Elizabethtown unexpected, and called at the home of Sarah Bush Johnston. When she learned he had become a widower she was not long in anticipating his mission. The courtship abruptly ended thirteen years before was as hastily renewed. "He told her that they had known each other for a long time, and had both lost their partners, He then asked her to marry him. She said that she could not just then. When asked the reason why she replied that she owed a few small debts which she must pay. Thomas asked her how much they were, and after learning the amounts and the names of the creditors went out and paid each one of them. Then they were married."

unpublished Reference Copy  
Tuesday February 1819  
George L. Rogers Credentials

George L Rogers produced in court credentials of his ordination and of his being in regular communion with the Methodist Episcopal ~~Ch~~ Church. A lisencc is granted him to celebrate the rights of matrimony in this state agreeable to the laws made and provided when he took the oaths ~~several~~ several oaths required by law and entered into and acknowledged bond in the penalty of 500 pounds with John Miller his security, conditioned as the law directs

Hardin County Court Order Book D page 558



## The Foster Mother 9

In January 1889 Eleanor Atkinson visited Dennis Hanks, who married Mrs. Johnston's daughter, Elizabeth, Dennis was then living with his daughter Mrs. Dowling in Charleston, Ill. After the interview with Dennis when Miss Atkinson was about to leave, Mrs. Dowling paid Thomas Lincoln the first real compliment which the writer had ever seen in print. If there is any coloring or exaggeration in this brief sketch of Thomas Lincoln, the writer is not able to detect it. Mrs. Dowling's remarks follow: "I don't want you to go away thinking so bad of Grandfather Lincoln.....I'm just tired of hearing Grandfather Lincoln abused. Everybody runs him down. Father never gave him credit for what he was. He made a good living and I reckon he would have gotten something ahead if he hadn't been so generous. He had the Old Virginia notion of hospitality--- liked to see people set up to the table and eat heartily, and there were always plenty of his relations, and grandmother's, willing to live on him. Uncle Abe got his honesty and his clean notions of living and his kind heart from his father. Maybe the Hanks family was smarter but some of them couldn't hold a candle to Grandfather Lincoln when it came to morals. I've heard grandmother Lincoln say many a time that he was kind and loving and kept his word, and always paid his way, and never turned a dog from the door."\*

(32)

We are inclined to believe that there was no attempt at deception on the part of Thomas Lincoln, in his wooing of the widow, and that "Sally" Johnston not only contributed to the prosperity and cheer of the Lincoln home in Indiana, but also bettered her own condition by this renewal of the friendship of earlier days.

## The Foster Mother 11

Three different families constituted the first real orphanage of any proportions in Indiana. It may be said with credit to both Thomas and Sarah that from all reports these families thus united became a harmonious unit and the young people grew to maturity with deep affection for each other, two of them finally receiving the marriage vows. From the lips of Sarah Bush herself we learn that her love for her own children was not greater than the love she bore the children of Thomas Lincoln, and the other orphan Dennis Hanks became her son-in-law. Elizabeth Johnston married Dennis Hanks on June 20, 1821.\* (35)

On Aug. 2, 1826, Sarah Lincoln married Aaron Grisby.\* (36)

One month later, Sept. 13, Matilda Johnston married Squire Hall.\* (37)

Most biographers say this man's name was Levi. Levi was his father's name, and Dennis was the illegitimate son of Levi Hall's wife before their marriage.

Sarah Johnston Lincoln never returned to Kentucky after her move at the time of her marriage to Thomas, as the family later on moved from Indiana to Illinois, and finally settled in Charlestown Ill., where Thomas died on Jan. 17, 1851.\* Christopher Bush, the youngest brother of Sarah, (38)

visited her in her Illinois home and his children began to look on their Aunt Sally with tender regard. She died in Charlestown on April 10, 1869 and is buried beside her husband.\* (39)



The Foster Mother 12

There has recently been erected at Elizabethtown through the efforts of the Elizabethtown woman's Club a memorial of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks and Sally Bush all of whom at one time lived in Elizabethtown. That portion of the inscription referring to Sally Bush is as follows:

"A year after the death of Nancy Hanks Lincoln in Indiana, Thomas Lincoln returned and on Dec. 2, 1819 married here Mrs. Sally Bush Johnston, a resident of Elizabethtown who became the beloved foster mother of Abraham Lincoln." \* (40)

# The Foster Mother

## ERRATA

\*\*\*\*\*

Nancy Hanks who accepted the honor which Sarah Johnston declined. Lamon, page 11.

Some have supposed that he (Thomas Lincoln) deceived her (Sarah Johnston) by painting his Indiana prospects in too glowing colors. Snider, page 50.

Compared with the mental poverty of her husband (Thomas Lincoln) and relations, her (Sarah Johnston's) accomplishments were certainly very great. Lamon, page

Thomas Lincoln's widowhood was brief, he had scarcely mourned the death of his first wife a year until he reappeared in Kentucky at Elizabethtown in search for another. Herndon, page 20.

He (Thomas Lincoln) returned suddenly from the wilds of Indiana, and representing himself as a thriving prosperous farmer induced her (Sarah Johnston) to marry him Lamon, page 11.

Her (Sarah Johnston) social status is fixed by the comparison of a neighbor who observed that life among the Hankses, the Lincolns and the Enlows was a long ways below the life among the Bushes. Herndon, page

He (Thomas Lincoln) went back to Kentucky and found there Mrs. Sally Bush Johnston, a widow, who when, as the maiden Sarah Bush, he had loved and courted and by whom he had been refused. Morse. page 11.

Her (Sarah Johnston's) reason for rejecting Lincoln comes down to us in no words of her own, but it is clear enough that it was his want of character, and the "bad luck" as the Hanks have it which attended him. Lamon, page 11.

Sally Lincoln formerly Sally Bush but now the step mother of the future president was entitled to a part of the purchase money (The Bush Estate) and a portion was to be taken out at the store (Helm's) at Elizabethtown) and she always brought little Abe to carry her bundles home. Haycraft, page 112.

After the death of the Nancy of Washington County (Ky) Thomas Lincoln courted and was engaged to a Miss Sarah Bush of Hardin County, and so matters stood when he went with Abe Enlow to South Carolina to assist with his drove of Kentucky mules. This left Sally Bush destitute but she married a Johnston and when Nancy (of So. Carolina) died this Sally Bush or Mrs Johnston was a widow with some children. Then Thomas Lincoln came back and married her. Knotts Barton (P) page 136.



# LINCOLN'S EARLY DAYS.

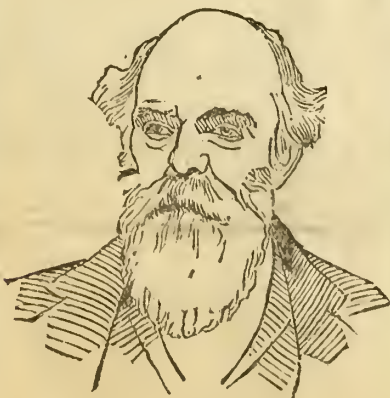
## Quaint and Curious Recollections of His Career in Illinois.

### His First Appearance in the Legislature— His First Efforts for Distinction.

### Interviews with Old Friends and Neighbors, Who Are Now Proud to Say That They Knew the Great Emancipator.

CHARLESTON, ILL., January.—Abraham Lincoln, while practicing law during his residence at Springfield, was a frequent visitor at this little town, then, as now, the county seat of Coles County. His father and stepmother resided in a small cabin on Goose Nest Prairie, near Farmington, this (Coles) county, and Mr. Lincoln would often spend a few days or a week at this home, or with friends in this city. Several of his relatives who resided here then are still living, and your correspondent has recently heard from their lips many an interesting incident of Mr. Lincoln's life at that period. One of these gentlemen is Captain John Easton, of Charleston, now seventy-nine years of age, who has lived here since the city's earliest days, at one time a member of the State Legislature, a man who at forty must have been a fine specimen of physical manhood, who is now but slightly bent, and whose only sign of departing strength is his whitened head and slightly faltering step.

"Tell you something of Abe Lincoln?" said he. "Why, sir, I like nothing better. Abe was a life-long friend of mine. Got acquainted with Abe in the Black Hawk war. Loved him the first time I saw him, and love him still. Abe was quite a boy when his father moved from Indiana to this State. He inherited a dislike to farm—at least he never amounted to much. He would rather do odd jobs for somebody; was inclined to tell wonderful stories from infancy. Dennis Hanks, a relative, who taught him to read, says Abe caught the mania from the Arabian Nights, as that constituted his sole library at the time. He ingeniously worked out fanciful stories, applying them to current times. He and the boys often had wrestling matches. Never saw his equal at wrestling. Joshua Veach, who



CAPTAIN JOHN EASTON.

lived west of town, was considered a powerful fellow, but when Abe and he had a trial of prowess Abe always came up on top.

"I think the first time I saw Abe he was the ugliest chap that had ever obstructed my vision. But he was honest to the core and true

as steel. He would not drink, but at times, under trying circumstances, a highly-polished cuss word would escape his lips. I am inclined to think his talent for story-telling was the first step in the chain of circumstances that led his feet to the White House. It was the "hurry-hay boys" who had been with him in the Black Hawk war, and who before had chewed and spit tobacco around his stove in his little store at Salem, in Sangamon County, that nominated and elected him to the Legislature which met at Vandalia, then the State Capital. That was the winter of 1836-7. I was elected as a member from Coles, and was with him there. At that time parties were not divided so markedly as at the present.

"It was in this first Legislature he, then an unknown man, made himself spoken of by the people of the State. Some measure, I am so old now I can not recall just what it was, was before the House, which Lincoln and his friends, who were in the minority, I among them, took decided grounds against. We were enough to break a quorum, and in the afternoon made it a point to not be present when the vote was taken. The other members, on a promise that they would compromise the bill in the evening, persuaded us to return at the night session. As soon as we were in the Assembly-room the officers locked the doors, thus intercepting us from retiring, and by this method thought they had us cornered. The



LINCOLN'S STEP-MOTHER.

building was what might be called a two-story one. A stairway led from the ground probably twelve or fifteen feet to the hall, and at the landing a small room had to be crossed before coming to the Assembly proper. It appears that Lincoln had suspected this movement, and in the early evening had measured the distance from the windows to the ground, and also ascertained whether they might be hoisted without delay. Finding the measure would be brought up without modification, and that they would be powerless to hinder, Abe whispered to his friends, and, making a simultaneous movement for the windows, before the others knew what was the matter, we were all outside, the quorum broken, and the House had to adjourn. This at that primitive period was considered a big thing, and Lincoln, as he deserved, got the praise. An account of this was published in the newspapers at St. Louis, Vandalia, Shawneetown and Springfield. I don't believe, however, there were more than three or four newspapers in the entire State. I remembered that Lincoln enjoyed this joke hugely himself, and laughed about it nearly the entire night.

### LINCOLN'S AVERSION TO DANCING—HIS MARRIAGE.

"Although Lincoln," continued the Captain, "was very fond of outdoor backwoods sports all his life, he was never given to dancing. I used to twit him about his abstemious disposition in this direction, while visiting him at Springfield after the capital was moved there. This was after Lincoln had married. His wife, however, dearly loved the ball-room, and Springfield could not furnish a lady who could grace a company or ball-room more happily than she. Abe never refused to accompany his wife to these festivities, but invariably stole away from her to the cloak-room when he did, where a party of like affectionate souls were assembled; and while Mary was dashing and smiling in the whirl of the dance, he would be spinning off yarns to his eager listeners. He was never seen in the dance, and would only appear in the grand promenade. I used to tell him he was too proud of his per-

sonal appearance to unbend to the touch of the fiddle. Because Abe and Mary were together in the ball-room only when arriving or taking their departure, people remarked that their home life was somewhat jarring. I think there never was a greater misstatement. There could be no more tender affection than existed between them even unto death.

"You have not heard the story of their marriage? Well, I will give it you as I have been told by a very dear friend long since dead. There have been statements published about Lincoln wanting to marry other girls, but I doubt very much if he ever popped the question to any maiden other than Mary Todd, and she accepted him. The day was set for the marriage. It came and the bridegroom also, but for some unknown reason the bride did not. This made Lincoln for the time very angry. Explanations satisfactory to appease him were afterward made, courtship followed, and then a second engagement entered into. The day was set for the marriage a second time, invited guests and relatives assembled, the bride, minister and everything in waiting, but the groom this time failed to materialize. Lincoln afterward explained his conduct to his intended's enraged kinsfolk that as the bride, acting the party of the first part, had at a time in the past did as he, the party of the

second part, had done in the second instance, he thought they were now square, and was willing to renew the compact for the third time. Other explanations followed, new obligations were finally entered into, the wedding day for the third time named. Both bride and groom, minister and guests were this time present, and the marriage duly celebrated. Mind, I give you this as the statement of another, but a man whom I believe would tell naught but the truth.

### LOVE FOR HIS STEP-MOTHER.

"Contrary to the usual accepted theory that step-mothers are unmitigated nuisances, and should be consigned to oblivion," continued Mr. Easton, "Lincoln's actions through life toward his step-mother would prove the contrary. I was keeping store during his law practice in a little room in Charleston, and often has he come into my store with a fee-note earned in a case and say, 'Cap, let mother (he invariably called her mother) trade this ten-dollar note out until I come again.' Often while in town would he drive out to see his parents, but he never was known to do so without first getting some sugar and coffee and dried apples to take with him. A ten-dollar fee-note meant a good deal in value in those days. Why, I have known lawyers to go seventy-five or one hundred miles to try a case in the Circuit Court and pay expenses for a fee of ten or twenty dollars. And a fifty-dollar fee in a murder case was a bonanza."

### THOUGHTS OF THE PRESIDENCY.

"Lincoln's political ambition began very young in his public career" [in answer to a question of when he thought Lincoln first set his stake for the Presidency]. "While a member of the second or third Legislatures of the State, I received letters from Lincoln urging me to see to it that the members known to be in his favor for the State Senatorship should be held solidly together. I can not say whether



REV. THOS. GOODWIN.

Good man



he thought at that time by an election to the Senatorship it would be a plank in his walk to the Presidency; but looking at it from subsequent events one would be inclined to reason so.

"I remember very distinctly the campaign in which Douglas and Lincoln were engaged stumping for the Senate. At that time I was running a newspaper in Charleston. I took the grounds with Douglas on the slavery issue, but I think Lincoln got the best of him every time they crossed swords. Their efforts at Charleston were very interesting. A number of very prominent men were on the platform, among them Tom Marshall, Congressman Smith, of Chicago, Ficklin, Dr. Chambers, and I think Usher Linder. Douglas had accused Lincoln, while in Congress, of refusing to vote supplies to our Mexican veterans, or words to that effect, when Lincoln arose, and grabbing Ficklin, who had been his associate in Congress, by the collar, and wheeling him in front of the vast audience, told him to tell the truth. Ficklin, as near as I can remember, said: 'My friends, gentlemen, I am a friend of both the speakers. I am as much the friend of Douglas as I am of Lincoln; I believe Lincoln has told the truth in the matter.' It is needless to add Mr. Ficklin at that time and all through his life was a Democrat."

#### LINCOLN'S DUEL WITH SHIELDS.

"Some time after the election of Lincoln to the State Legislature an article appeared in one of our State organs, entitled 'Lost Township, Kickapoo Point, Coles County,' and signed 'Aunt Becca,' at which the Secretary of State, a gentleman named Shields, took umbrage. Knowing that Lincoln came originally from Coles, Shields accused him of its authorship, and challenged him for a duel, which Lincoln accepted, and having choice of weapons, chose broad-swords. Lincoln, you know, had arms as long as a rail, and Shields was rather a stumpy-built fellow, with no length of arm at all. Seconds were chosen by each, and the place for the bloody combat to be fought selected near Alton. It was thought for a time that Shields would back out, seeing the odds against him; but he was a plucky fellow, Irish by birth, bull-headed at that, and refused to withdraw. As a friend of Lincoln I went down to see he had fair play. A ten-inch plank was laid on the ground, over which neither party was allowed to go, and a rope drawn around stakes for a ring ten feet in diameter, inclosing the board in the center. The principals took their positions, and everything was in readiness for the butchery, for such it would have been, and Lincoln wouldn't have been the victim, either. Just at this point, however, the seconds of both parties threw up, the principals after some formalities shook hands, and the duel ended. Ever after Shields was a true friend of Abe. He won much distinction in the course of years, being U. S. Senator from the States of Missouri, Minnesota and Illinois."

#### LINCOLN'S FATHER'S FUNERAL.

Rev. Thomas Goodwin, an old gentleman of this city, seventy-nine years of age, the pastor who preached the funeral sermon of Thomas Lincoln, was met on the street the other day. He says:

"I was teaching at the time at Stringtown five days in the week, and in the eight days preceding the funeral exercises rode seventy-two miles on horseback and preached seven times, Lincoln's funeral being the sixth meeting. It occurred on Saturday, January 8, 1851, and I remember the day well, as it was very cold and snow on the ground. Services were held at his stepson's, John D. Johnson's residence. It is now known as Thomas Lincoln's homestead. The exercises commenced at 10 o'clock. The text I selected on the occasion was I. Corinthians, xv., 21-22: 'For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' In his case I could not say aught but good. He was buried in what is called Gordon's graveyard, Pleasant Grove Township, Coles County. He was a consistent member through life of the Church of my choice, the Christian Church, or Church of Christ, and was, as far as I know—and I was a very intimate friend—illiterate, yet always truthful, conscientious and religious. At his death he had reached the age of seventy-three years. He walked with the poor of this earth, wore homespun clothes and a coonskin cap, but I think, when the martyred President entered the gates of the city which stand ajar, that among the

first to welcome him was Thomas Lincoln."

#### AN UGLIER MAN THAN LINCOLN.

"Old Tommy used to delight in telling about Abe's uglier man than himself," continued Mr. Goodwin. "When Abe was about eighteen years old he went out one day to look for game. Deer and turkey were at that time quite plenty. Going along he met coming towards him, two or three hundred yards away, a man. They kept coming nearer, and when about fifteen or twenty yards apart Abe stopped and drew up his gun as though in the act of shooting. The man hallooed to him to stop, and Abe lowered his gun. Being asked the reason for such an act, Lincoln replied: 'I always said that if I ever met a man uglier than myself I would shoot him on the spot.' The man looked at Lincoln steadily for a moment, then he stepped out in the clearing and, drawing up his coat, said: 'Well, sir, if I am any uglier than you are you can shoot.' It is needless to add that the shot was never fired."

#### HIS FIRST SIGHT OF LINCOLN.

Your correspondent had the pleasure of an interview with Mr. Dennis Hanks, an own cousin of Nancy Hanks, the wife of Thomas



DENNIS F. HANKS, WHO TAUGHT LINCOLN TO READ.

Lincoln and mother of Abraham. Mr. Hanks is now eighty-eight years of age, well preserved and never tires of speaking of the many virtues and excellencies of his relative.

"When did you first see Abe?"

"About twenty-four hours after birth—hardly that—I rikklect I run all the way, over two miles, to see Nancy Hanks' hoy baby. 'Twas common then to come together in them days to see new babies. Her name was Nancy Hanks before she married Lincoln. I held the wee one a minit. I was ten years old, and it tickled me to hold the pulpy, red little thing. When Abe was about nine years old his father moved to Indiana, Spencer County. We came out a year later, and he then had a cabin up, and he gave us the shanty. On this spot Abe grew to manhood. Our cabins were about fifteen rods apart. Abe killed a turkey the day we got there, and couldn't get through telling about it."

"It is stated you taught him to read; is that so?"

"I reckon. I taught him to spell, read and cipher. He knew his letters pretty wellish; his mother taught him his letters. If there ever was a good woman, she were one, a true Christian of the Baptist Church, but she died soon after we arrived, and left him without a teacher. His father couldn't read a word. Abe went to school in all about a quarter; I then set up to help him; did the best I could. Webster's speller was his first favorite; a copy I had of the Indiana Statutes came next. Then he happened on to a copy of the 'Rabian Nights! Abe would lay on the floor with a chair under his head, and laugh over that book for hours. I told him they was likely lies from end to end, but he learned to read right well in them."

#### NOT GROWN THEN.

"At that time he was not grown, only six feet two inches; he was six feet four and one-half inches when grown. Tall, lathy and gangling; not much appearance; not handsome; not ugly, but peculiar. This kind of a fellow: If a man rode up horseback, Abe

would be the first out and on the fence to ask questions till his father would give him a knock on the head; then he would throw at birds or something; but pondered all the while. He was very strong and active. I were ten year older, but I couldn't rattle him down; his legs were too long for me. Strong? My, how he could chop wood! his axe would flash and bite into a sugar tree or sycamore, and down it would come. If you heard him falling trees you would think there were three men in the woods cutting. But he never was sassy or quarrelsome. I have seen him walk in some crowd of rowin' rowdies and tell some droll yarn that would hush them all up. It was the same when he was a lawyer. There was a sumthin' peculiar about him. We then had no idea a' his future greatness. He was a bright lad, but the big world seemed ahead of him. We were all slow-going folks, though we never suspected it."

"Did he take to books eagerly?"

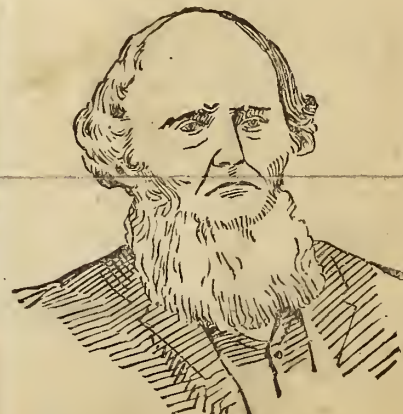
"No; we had to hire him at first. But when he got a taste, it was the old story—we had to pull the sow's ears to get her to the trough, and then pull her tail to get her away. What Church did Abe belong to? The Baptist Church. I will tell you a circumstance about him. He would come home from church, put a box in the middle of the cabin floor, and repeat the sermon from text to doxology. I've heard him do it often."

"Did he get his sterling principles of character from one or both parents?"

"Both. His strong will from his father. His father used to swear a little. One day his little girl picked up a foul oath, and was bruising the bitter morsel in her sweet lips, when Nancy called 'Thomas!' and said: 'Listen, husband.' He stopped that habit; never swore again. Abe's kindness he got from his mother. His humor, love of humanity, hatred of slavery, all came from her. I am free to say Abe was a mother's boy."

#### LINCOLN'S BIRTH.

"About ten or fifteen years ago a story was put in circulation that President Lincoln was an illegitimate child. It was stated that his father's name was Abraham Inlow and not Thomas Lincoln. A Mr. Christopher Graham, in 1882, of Louisville, Ky., aged ninety-eight years, made a sworn statement about the marriage of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, in many particulars correct, but not in all. I am an own cousin of Nancy Hanks, the wife of Thomas Lincoln; we were both residents of Kentucky. Her parents resided in Mercer County, and I was a resident of Hardin County. My uncle, Joseph Hanks, was a resident of



JOHN HANKS, LINCOLN'S PARTNER IN RAIL-SPLITTING.



Elizabethtown, the county seat of Hardin County, and engaged for a time in cabinet making. It was at Uncle Joseph's house that Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks first met each other. Thomas, at the time, was learning the cabinet-making trade with uncle. Thomas and Nancy were lawfully married by Alex McDougal, a Baptist preacher, in 1806; I can not recall the day or month of the year. The wedding took place at McDougal's house, which was eight or ten miles southeast of Elizabethtown, in Hardin, now La Rue, County. At the time I was seven years old, and was living with my uncle, Thomas Sparrow, who had taken me to raise. The newly married couple staid all night at our house the day of their marriage. Thomas Lincoln gave a \$40 bond before he got his marriage license, which he obtained at the county seat. The name of the Circuit Clerk from whom Lincoln received his license was Benjamin Helms. Thomas Lincoln was aged twenty-seven years and Nancy Hanks was in her twenty-fifth year when they were married. Among those present at the ceremony was a daughter of McDougal's, to whom I wrote, and got a statement at the time the report was circulated that Abe was an illegitimate child, in which she declares that Nancy Hanks and Thomas Lincoln were married according to law, on the South Fork of Nolin Creek, Hardin County, Kentucky, in 1806. This statement I sent to Robert Lincoln, Abe's son. I can not now recall the lady's maiden name. Abe Lincoln was born on a small tributary of Rolling Fork River, called Knob Creek, the same county, in 1809, three years after Thomas and Nancy were married."

#### JUDGE O. B. FICKLIN'S TRIBUTE.

Hon. O. B. Ficklin, of this city, recently deceased, who was a member of Congress with Lincoln and an associate at the Bar, leaves this statement of the martyred President:

"He was naturally despondent and sad, like many another who has made mirth for a merry



JUDGE O. B. FICKLIN.

company. He could tell a story to make a group roar with laughter, but when his face was unlit by pleasantry it was dark, gloomy and peculiar. The pictures we see of him only half represent him, as they can only show him in repose. Lincoln was a man of two distinct personages. He was a man of keen insight and absorbing meditation. His sudden changes from elate joy to silent brooding over the problems of life were noticeable to all his friends. One moment a boy exultant, sunny, cheery, the next a care-burdened man, deep in thought. His characteristics were honor, fidelity and transparent truth. Had Douglas had these qualities to as great degree he would have been a greater man than Abe Lincoln. I am a life-long Democrat, but I loved Lincoln. He was, I say, a greater man than Washington. He was a lover of music, flowers, birds, Burns' poetry, and could read Campbell's 'Last Man' as no one else. Abe was not what you would call eloquent in speaking; he was a strong, sensible speaker, of keen discernment, and was at his best before a jury. He could present his points in a stately array. He had a fashion of pointing at the jury with his long bony forefinger of his right hand. There seemed to be something magnetic always about that finger. He was elected to Congress in 1846 over Peter Cartwright, the great pioneer preacher of Illinois. I was elected, too, the same year, but had been before. That was during the Mexican War."





# His Parentage Was Most Worthy

BY RICHARD B. B. WOOD,  
Of Keokuk, Ia.

In my boyhood and early manhood, I heard much of Abraham Lincoln in the old Kentucky county where he was born and where I first saw the light and lived for a number of years. The spot where he was born, out on Nolin creek, or river, was in Hardin county then. This territory was separated from Hardin and a new county formed in 1843, called La Rue.

Kentucky was a pioneer land when Abraham Lincoln was born and this locality was the scene of many a bloody conflict between the white settlers and the heartless savages. His rugged manhood must have been absorbed from the hills and valleys of that hardy old region and the startling legends he heard of the still earlier days. There were no pacific Chief Keokuks to deal with in the early pioneer days of Kentucky. It was war to the knife, requiring sturdy, knightly men to meet those cunning, scalp taking, murderous Indians. Abraham Lincoln, grandfather of the later Abraham Lincoln, reddened the soil of Kentucky with his lifeblood, treacherously murdered by these savages, after bravely contending with them for years. The grandfather, a prosperous farmer and large land owner, was shot from ambush while engaged, with three of his sons, in a clearing on one of his farms in Jefferson county, not far away.

Persons who have been over the ground in the locality where Lincoln was born, as I have been on many occasions, have a striking inspiration; the hills and rocks, the dense woodland, the verdure covered valleys, the numerous streams, the gurgling springs gushing from the earth, the Indian mounds and grand old Muldraugh's hill, linking a mountain chain for scores of miles, with the turnpike winding like a dusty serpent around and along its picturesque sides, the only sign of civilization sometimes for miles—these wonderful works present a natural awe inspiring grandeur that cannot be described.

After Lincoln came into prominence the old timers at Elizabethtown, the county seat of Hardin, discussed the family and recalled many interesting incidents which before had been commonplace and not worth remembering.

An old great uncle of mine, William Bush, Jr., residing a mile and a half from town, spoke to me of Lincoln at that time as follows:

"He's putting on style now. He calls himself Lincoln. His name is Linkhorn. That was the old family name when they lived here."

And the old uncle would have it no other way. Linkhorn seems to be the way many of the old people pronounced the name, just as they mispronounced many other names. But I've found on investigation that L-i-n-c-o-l-n was the correct spelling and pronunciation of that name from time immemorial.

This good old uncle of mine told me also of "Tom" Lincoln and his first wife and of Mrs. Sallis Bush Johnston, a relative, the second wife of Thomas Lincoln, and stepmother of Abraham Lincoln. I knew numbers of the relatives of the stepmother. Her maiden name was Sallie Bush. She was a widow when Thomas Lincoln married her. She came from a sturdy, thrifty, honest family. My maternal

grandmother was a Bush before marriage, a cousin to Lincoln's good stepmother, of brave and chivalrous stock, sometimes rough, perhaps, but always ready to go on an errand of mercy or to deeds of valor, among the early pioneers of "the dark and bloody ground," in the days that caused women to weep and tried men's souls.

If Thomas Lincoln was poor, all his second wife's relations were not. But let me say right here that we believe the greatest inheritance Abraham Lincoln possessed, combined with his determination, ambition and his thirst for knowledge, was poverty. It was the spur that drove him onward and upward, strengthened his body and broadened an enlightened mind. He died greater than any master of finance or man of affluence and ease has ever gone to rest.

Abraham Lincoln was not a low-born, low-bred man, as many writers have insinuated. His parents were poor, but Thomas Lincoln was not of the "poor white trash." He was a respected man among the hardy pioneers of his day. He held only humble positions of honor and trust, but not an individual has had the audacity to say that he did not perform his duty with the strictest integrity. He held these, too, in days when places were thrust upon a citizen for his merit and not sought for the purposes of boodle and graft. His great son's career was the life of the father lived over again, in a greater struggle and a greater triumph as the world weighs success. But in the great day when the trumpet shall sound, and the legions of the earth are called, the dead arising, which shall have the brighter crown—father or son?

I would emphasize the fact of Abraham Lincoln's good birth and rearing. The Lincoln family came from a long line of sturdy, honest ancestors. Kentucky has a county named Lincoln, but what is greater credit to the eminence of his ancestors, it was not named for him, but for Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, a distinguished son of Massachusetts, and prominent general in the revolutionary war. The line of ancestry of the Kentucky Lincolns, while coming from Virginia to Kentucky, has with almost certainty been traced back to the family of this eminent soldier and early secretary of war, who died the year after Abraham Lincoln was born. As to the early training of Lincoln, he was fortunate. His stepmother, Sallie Bush Lincoln, had much to do with this. She was a wise, capable woman. One writer who knew her, thus speaks of her:

Sarah Bush Lincoln changed the character of the Lincoln home completely when she entered it, and there is no question of the importance of her influence upon the development of her stepson, Abraham. She was a woman of great natural dignity and kindness and highly esteemed by all who knew her.

Another of her familiar acquaintances says in writing of her:

Thomas Lincoln went back to Kentucky and returned with a new wife—Sallie Bush Johnston, a widow with three children, John, Sarah, and Matilda. The new mother came well provided with household furniture, bringing many things unfamiliar to little Abraham—one fine bureau, one table, one set of chairs, one large clothes chest, cooking utensils, knives, forks, bedding, and other articles. She was a woman of energy, thrift and gentleness, and at once made



the cabin homelike, and taught the children the habits of cleanliness and comfort.

And now a word as to the connections of Abraham Lincoln and Mrs. Lincoln at the birthplace of the former. Ben Hardin Helm, son of the late John L. Helm, the latter twice governor of Kentucky, who could have been United States senator had he not considered it a greater honor to be governor of the commonwealth which he loved—was a West Point graduate, but resigned as a lieutenant and practiced law with his distinguished father. He married Miss Todd, a half sister of Mrs. Abraham Lincoln. At the beginning of the civil war President Lincoln, his brother-in-law, offered him the high and responsible position of paymaster general of the United States army. Although urged to accept it by Mr. Lincoln, young Helm declined, espoused the confederate cause and was killed at the battle of Chickamauga as brigadier general commanding a brigade in the division of Gen. John J. Breckenridge.

The widow of General Helm, an educated, cultured lady, held the position of postmistress at Elizabeth, Ky., appointed we believe by President Arthur; any how she served through Cleveland's first administration, continued through Harrison's and until a successor was appointed during Cleveland's second term.

These records seem to be excellent so far as the kinship connections are concerned, much better than the average family can produce.

Capt. Samuel Haycraft of Elizabethtown was an old resident there in my day, was there in the wild and dangerous Indian days. His spacious old brick residence, which had been his father's, bore the record of its age on a stone in its walls which read "1800." The old marriage license of Thomas Lincoln and Sal-

lie Johnston, brown and dusty with age now, was issued and signed by Captain Haycraft, county clerk, whose son, Edgar H. Haycraft, a druggist, left Kentucky during the civil war and settled in the vicinity of Des Moines. This license is all written, as there were very few printed blanks used in those days. This is the way the quaint old document reads:

State of Kentucky: Hardin county, Sec. To any authorized minister of the gospel or authorized magistrate these are license and permit you to join together in the honorable state of matrimony according to the rules and customs of the church of which you are reputed a member, Mr. Thomas Lincoln and Miss Sarah Johnston—he, the said Thomas Lincoln, having given bond and security in my office according to law. Given under my hand as clerk of the county aforesaid, the 2d day of December, 1819, and in the 28th year of the commonwealth.

Sam'l Haycraft, Jr., C. H. C. C.

A bond was required in Kentucky before a marriage license could be issued and this bond for "the sum of 50 pounds, United States currency," and conditioned "that if there should be no legal marriage shortly to be solemnized between the above bound Thomas Lincoln and Miss Sarah Johnston, for which a license was this day issued, then the above obligation to be void, else to remain in full force and virtue in law."

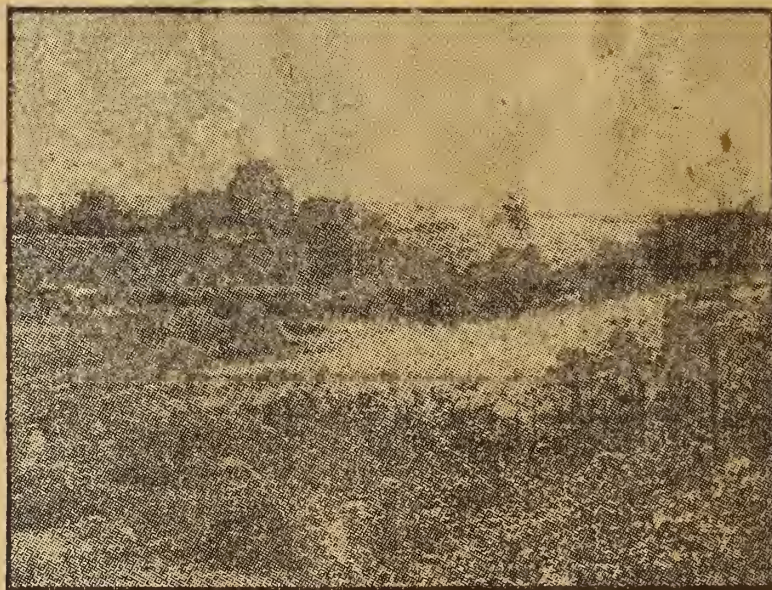
This bond was signed by Thomas Lincoln, the groom, and Christopher Bush. An error will be noted in both the marriage license and the bond. In both papers the bride is named as "Miss" Sarah Johnston, the fact being well known that she was a widow. In those days, how-

ever, a married woman was more frequently carelessly addressed as "Miss" Jones than "Mrs." Jones.

Captain Haycraft was always an intimate of mine, even in early boyhood, although he was more than old enough to be my grandfather. He was a prolific writer for the local press, especially on local history; he represented his district in the state senate, was active in having a monument erected over the grave of Daniel Boone and was for years and years clerk of the courts. When I was city attorney of the town he was city treasurer, which continued our intimacy.

He knew the Lincolns well.

Captain Haycraft told me many stories of Lincoln and the family. I can hastily gather only a few fragments after a lapse of a third of a century. We had our law office, for a time, up stairs, in a brick building on a corner of the public square at Elizabethtown. In the Lincoln days the rooms on the first floor were occupied by John B. Helm, who died at Hannibal, Mo., as a general store keeper. Captain Haycraft remembered well that little Abe, a barefooted boy of six or seven years, clad in homespun and torn straw hat, would go to the store, probably on some errand for the family, or possibly to hear the loungers tell yarns. Old and young met there as they meet at stores at all country towns. For some reason they took special interest in little Abe and would buy home made (maple) sugar for him, set him up on the old fashioned counter, just to see him eat it. And when he would tell this story, the venerable man would chuckle with delight as if he enjoyed the telling with the same keen relish that little Abe



THE OLD LINCOLN FARM IN KENTUCKY AS IT IS TODAY.

did in the eating of the sugar. And I have often thought and wondered if there was not some hidden and undeveloped magnetism in the little barefoot boy then—a germ of greatness that drew men to him, and grew and grew until it lifted him to the loftiest heights. There must have been. And as sure as fate, there was.

I have given a few hastily remembered incidents and facts concerning Abraham Lincoln not heretofore published, which it is hoped will prove entertaining. My special effort, however, has been to refute the prevailing idea that Lincoln was born in poverty and squalor and reared in ignorant illiteracy, rough and coarse.

I have been anxious to have the people unacquainted with the facts, to see Lincoln and his home just as they were, his ancestors the good, honest, sensible people that they were with as much or even more of culture and refinement than was found in the average home of that day.

I would have them not to look upon him as an accident—a mishapen, valueless pebble picked up on the banks of a sluggish mountain stream, but rather as a pure Kentucky diamond, a jewel of great price, which time had polished into a brilliancy that dazzled the world, and so won the heart and confidence of the people that when he died the whole world wept.





**M**RS. SARAH BUSH LINCOLN

# Loses Mother Early. <sup>1865</sup>

IN the summer of 1818 this Pigeon creek settlement was visited by a fearful disease, called, in common parlance, "the milk sickness," says Lamon's Life. It swept off the cattle which gave the milk, as well as the human beings who drank it. It seems to have prevailed in the neighborhood from 1818 to 1829, for it is given as one of the reasons for Thomas Lincoln's removal to Illinois at the latter date. But in the year first mentioned its ravages were especially awful. Its most immediate effects were severe retchings and vomitings, and, while the deaths from it were not necessarily sudden, the proportion of those who finally died was uncommonly large.

Among the number who were attacked by it, and lingered on for some time in the midst of great sufferings, were Thomas and Betsy Sparrow and Mrs. Nancy Lincoln. It was now found expedient to remove the Sparrows from the wretched, "half faced camp," through which the cold autumn winds could sweep almost unobstructed, to the cabin of the Lincolns, which in truth was then little better. Many in the neighborhood had already died, and Thomas Lincoln had made all their coffins out of "green lumber cut with a whipsaw." In the meantime the Sparrows and Nancy were growing alarmingly worse.

There was no physician in the county—not even a pretender to the science of medicine, and the nearest regular practitioner was located at Yellow Banks, Ky., over thirty miles distant. It is not probable that they ever secured his services. They would have been too costly, and none of the persons who witnessed and describe these scenes speaks of his having been there. At length, in the first days of October, the Sparrows died, and Thomas Lincoln sawed up his green lumber and made rough boxes to inclose the mortal remains of his wife's two best and oldest friends.

## Nancy Hanks Dies.

A day or two after, on the 5th of October, 1818, Nancy Hanks Lincoln rested from her troubles. Thomas Lincoln took to his green wood again and made a box for Nancy. There were about twenty persons at her funeral. They took her to the summit of a deeply wooded knoll, about half a mile southeast of the cabin, and laid her beside the Sparrows. If there were any burial services, they were of the briefest. But it happened that a few months later an itinerant preacher, named David Elkin, whom the Lincolns had known in Kentucky, wandered into the settlement, and he either volunteered or was employed to preach a sermon, which should commemorate the many virtues and pass in silence the few frailties of the poor woman who slept in the forest.

Dr. J. E. Holland gives this description

of the belated services. Lincoln, although then but 9 years of age, is credited with having induced his father to send for Elkin:

"As the appointed day approached, notice was given to the whole neighborhood, embracing every family within twenty miles. Neighbor carried the notice to neighbor. There was probably not a family that did not receive intelligence of the anxiously anticipated event. On a bright Sabbath morning the settlers of the region started for the cabin of the Lincolns; and, as they gathered in, they presented a picture worthy the pencil of the ablest artist. Some came in carts of the rudest construction, their wheels consisting of sections of the huge boles of forest trees, and every other member the product of the ax and auger; some came on horseback, two or three upon a horse; others came in wagons drawn by oxen, and still others came on foot."

## Received in Silence.

Two hundred persons in all were assembled when Parson Elkin came out from the Lincoln cabin, accompanied by the little family, and proceeded to the tree under which the precious dust of a wife and mother was buried. The congregation received the preacher and the mourning family in a silence broken only by the songs of birds and the murmur of insects or the creaking cart of some late comer. Taking his stand at the foot of the grave, Parson Elkin lifted his voice in prayer and sacred song and then preached a sermon. The occasion, the eager faces around him, and all the sweet influences of the morning inspired him with an unusual fluency and fervor, and the flickering sunlight, as it glanced through the wind parted leaves, caught many a tear upon the bronzed cheeks of his auditors, while father and son were overcome by the revival of their great grief.

Many years later, Lamon says, the bodies of Levi Hall and his wife, were deposited in the same earth with that of Mrs. Lincoln. The graves of two or three children belonging to a neighbor's family are also near theirs. They are all crumbled in, sunken, and covered with wild vines in deep and tangled mats. The great trees were originally cut away to make a small cleared space for this primitive graveyard, but the young dogwoods have sprung up unopposed in great luxuriance, and in many instances the names of pilgrims to the burial place of the great Abraham Lincoln's mother are carved in their bark.

With this exception the spot is wholly unmarked. Her grave never had a stone nor even a board at its head or its foot; and the neighbors still dispute as to which of those unsightly hollows contains the ashes of Nancy Lincoln.



## Loved Abe As Her Own.

HOW the stepmother herself appreciated and loved the youth for whom she had cared and whom she lived to see not only made president but carried off by the dread work of the assassin is attested by the following from Lamon's "Life of Lincoln."

Mrs. Sarah Bush Lincoln was never able to speak of Abe's conduct to her without tears. In her interview with Mr. Herndon, when the sands of her life had nearly run out, she spoke with deep emotion of her own son, but said she thought that Abe was kinder, better, truer, than the other. Even the mother's instinct was lost as she looked back over those long years of poverty and privation in the Indiana cabin when Abe's grateful love softened the rigors of her lot and his great heart and giant frame were always at her command.

"Abe was a 'poor boy,'" said she, "and I can say what scarcely one woman—a mother—can say in a thousand. Abe never gave me a cross word or look and never refused, in fact or appearance, to do anything I requested him. I never gave him a cross word in all my life. His mind and mine—what little I had—seemed to run together. He was here after he was elected president." (At this point the aged speaker turned away to weep, and then, wiping her eyes with her apron, went on with the story.)

"He was dutiful to me always. I think he loved me truly. I had a son, John, who was raised with Abe. Both were good boys, but I must say, both now being dead, that Abe was the best boy I ever saw or expect to see. I wish I had died when my husband died. I did not want Abe to run for president; did not want him elected; was afraid somehow—felt in my heart, and when he came down to see me after he was elected president I still felt that something told me that something would befall Abe and that I should see him no more."

Once Lincoln received \$500 as a fee in a celebrated case. A legal friend called upon him next morning and found him sitting before a table on which his money was spread counting it over. "Look here, judge," said Lincoln; "see what a heap of money I have got from this case. Did you ever see anything like it? I have just got \$500; if it were only \$750 I would go directly and purchase a square of land and settle it upon my old stepmother."

His friend said that if the deficiency was

all he needed, he would loan him the amount, taking his note, to which Mr. Lincoln instantly acceded.

His friend then said: "Lincoln, I would not do what you have indicated. Your stepmother is getting old and will not probably live many years. I would settle the property upon her for her use during her lifetime, to revert to you upon death."

With much feeling Mr. Lincoln replied: "I shall do no such thing. It is a poor return, at the best, for all the good woman's devotion and fidelity to me, and there is not going to be any halfway business about it; and so saying, he gathered up the money and proceeded forthwith to carry his long cherished purpose into execution."

WRIGHT

# Fairy Stepmother.

**L**INCOLN the elder was not an impassioned lover, but his practical side had its advantages in spite of its commonplaceness. Here is the account of how he wooed Mrs. Johnston as told by a contemporary: 1508

"Thomas Lincoln returned to this place on the first day of December and inquired for the residence of Widow Johnston. She lived near the clerk's office. I was the clerk, and informed him how to find her. He was not slow to present himself before her, when the following courtship occurred. He said to her:

"I am a lone man, and you are a lone woman. I have known you from a girl, and you have known me from a boy; and I have come all the way from Indiana to ask if you'll marry me right off, as I've no time to lose."

"To which she replied: 'Tommy Lincoln, I have no objection to marrying you, but I cannot do it right off, for I owe several little debts which must first be paid.'

"The gallant man promptly said: 'Give me a list of your debts.'

"The list was furnished, and the debts were paid the same evening. The next morning, Dec. 2, 1819, I issued the license, and the same day they were married, bundled up, and started for home."

Mrs. Johnston has been denominated a "poor widow," says Lamon, but she possessed goods which, in the eyes of Tom Lincoln, were of almost unparalleled magnificence. Among other things, she had a bureau that cost \$40; and he informed her, on their arrival in Indiana, that in his deliberate opinion it was little less than sinful to be the owner of such a thing. He demanded that she should turn it into cash, which she positively refused to do. She had quite a lot of other articles, however, which he thought well enough in their way, and some of which were sadly needed in his miserable cabin in the wilds of Indiana.

Dennis Hanks speaks with great rapture of the "large supply of household goods" which she brought with her. There was "one fine bureau, one table, one set of chairs, one large clothes chest, cooking utensils, knives, forks, bedding, and other articles." It was a glorious day for little Abe and Sarah and Dennis when this wondrous collection of rich furniture arrived in the Pigeon creek settlement. But all this wealth required extraordinary means of transportation; and Lincoln had recourse to his brother-in-law, Ralph Krume, who lived just over the line in Breckinridge county. Krume came with a four horse team and moved Mrs. Johnston, now Mrs. Lincoln, with her family and effects, to the home of her new husband in Indiana.

## Discovered Mean Abode.

When she got there Mrs. Lincoln was much "surprised" at the contrast between the glowing representations which her husband had made to her before leaving Kentucky and the real poverty and meanness of the place. She had evidently been given to understand that the bridegroom had reformed his old Kentucky ways, and was now an industrious and prosperous farmer. She was scarcely able to restrain the expression of her astonishment and discontent; but, though sadly overreached in a bad bargain, her lofty pride and her high sense of Christian duty saved her from hopeless and useless repinings. On the contrary she

set about mending what was amiss with all her strength and energy. Her own goods furnished the cabin with tolerable decency.

She made Lincoln put down a floor, and hang windows and doors. It was in the depth of winter; and the children, as they nestled in the warm beds she provided for them, enjoying the strange luxury of security from the cold winds of December, must have thanked her from the bottoms of their newly comforted hearts. She had brought a son and two daughters of her own—John, Sarah, and Matilda; but Abe and his sister Nancy (whose name was speedily changed to Sarah), the ragged and hapless little strangers to her blood, were given an equal place in her affections.

## Clothed and Washed Them.

They were half naked, and she clad them from the stores of clothing she had laid up for her own. They were dirty, and she washed them; they had been ill-used, and she treated them with motherly tenderness. In her own modest language, she "made them look a little more human." "In fact," says Dennis Hanks, "in a few weeks all had changed, and where everything was wanting now all was snug and comfortable."

"She was a woman of great energy, of remarkable good sense, very industrious and saving, and also very neat and tidy in her person and manners, and knew exactly how to manage children. She took an especial liking to young Abe. Her love for him was warmly returned and continued to the day of his death. But few children loved their parents as he loved his stepmother. She soon dressed him up in entire new clothes, and from that time on he appeared to lead a new life. He was encouraged by her to study, and any wish on his part was gratified when it could be done."

"The two sets of children got along finely together, as if they had all been the children of the same parents. Mrs. Lincoln soon discovered that young Abe was a boy of uncommon natural talents, and that if rightly trained a bright future was before him, and she did all in her power to develop those talents."

When, in after years, Mr. Lincoln spoke of his "saintly mother" and of his "angel of a mother," he referred to this noble woman who first made him feel "like a human being"—whose goodness first touched his childish heart and taught him that blows and taunts and degradation were not to be his only portion in the world.

## GOOD TIME TO KEEP OUT.

His Explanation of Why He Didn't Interfere in the Republican Party Fight.

The strifes and jars in the Republican party at this time disturbed him more than anything else, but he avoided taking sides with any of the faction, with the dexterity that comes of simple honesty, which always finds the right road because it is looking for nothing else. "Nasty" asked him why he did not take some pronounced position in one trying encounter between two prominent Republicans.

"I learned," said he, "a great many years ago that in a fight between man and wife a third party should never get between the woman's skillet and the man's ax helve."



#### Debt to His Stepmother.

Sarah Bush Lincoln was a woman of thrift and energy, tall, straight, fair and a kind-hearted, motherly Christian. The American people owe a debt to this noble matron who did so much to influence and develop the character of the boy who was yet to save the nation from destruction.

1909

She was good to the Lincoln orphans whose mother lay out in the wild forest grave. She gave them warm clothing. She threw away the mat of corn husks and leaves on which they slept, and replaced it with a soft feather tick. She loved little "Abe," and the lonely boy returned her kindness and affection. In a primitive cabin set in the midst of a savage country, she created that noblest and best result of a good woman's heart and brain, a happy home.

The young Lincoln grew rapidly. Always an invidious reader, he ever found time for reading. In this pursuit he appears to have been tireless, but it seems not to have caused him to isolate himself from the social life of his primitive neighborhood. By 17 he was 6 feet 4 inches tall. His legs and arms were long, his hands and feet big and his skin dry and yellow. His gaunt face and melancholy gray eyes were set in cavernous sockets above his prominent cheekbones. He was not, therefore, a "ladies' man," but at the same time the mysterious something that made him beloved above the average of prominent Americans stood him in stead. He was always popular with his fellows, even as a spraddling boy.

It was after he had passed through many of his earlier vicissitudes that Lincoln encountered his first great romance. The family had moved from Indiana to Illinois. When they migrated from New Salem, Sangamon county, Abraham, who had assisted his father, stepmother and the rest of the family to passable affluence, remained behind. He split rails, he traveled down the Mississippi on a house boat and had his first elucidation of slavery in its most hideous forms, and of the uncertainty and irresponsibility of the negro race.

He returned to New Salem and became a clerk. In drawing crowds of villagers he proved a popular acquisition. The job "petered out" and he was elected a captain in the Black Hawk war. His was a bloodless campaign, but he came out of it with honors and increased popularity. All the time he had been reading every book he could find. Later he engaged in storekeeping with a partner, but he was not cast for a mercantile career.

1909





## LINCOLN'S STEPMOTHER.

Sixty-five years ago, on a grassy hillock in the magnificent primeval forest of Southern Indiana, a few miles from the Ohio river, stood the small, unhewn, half-finished and most forlorn log cabin of Thomas Lincoln. The father of the President was an idle, shiftless, worthless carpenter, who had taken up land in the wilderness, and lived by half cultivating a few acres and shooting the wild turkeys, the deer and other game with which the region teemed. The occupants of the cabin were himself, his wife, whose maiden name was Nancy Hanks, and two children, Nancy, 11 years of age, and Abraham, the future President, 9.

I suppose there never was a more beautiful country than this part of Indiana, as it was before the settlers disfigured it. Imagine the undulating country covered with trees of the largest size, oaks, beech, maples and walnuts, without that entangled mass of undergrowth which we find in the primeval forests of the Eastern States.

This land had probably been, within a few centuries, a prairie. The forest had gained upon the grass, but here and there, there was a small portion of the original prairie left, which, beside furnishing good pasture, gave to the region the aspect of an ancient heavily-wooded park, the result of labor, wealth and taste expended for ages. Upon some of the oases of emerald the deer found salt springs to which they resorted in great numbers; on the wider expanses the buffalo had recently fed; on others the arriving pioneer had fixed his camp and built his cabin.

The knoll on which Thomas Lincoln had fixed his house was free from trees, and sloped gently away on every side. The spot had every charm and every advantage except one; there was no good water within a mile, and it fell to the lot of these children to bring from that distance the water required for drinking.

Carpenter as he was, Thomas Lincoln had not taken the trouble either to finish or to furnish the house. It had no floor, no door, no windows. There were three or four three-legged stools in the house and no other seats. The table was a broad slab supported by four legs, with the flat side upwards. There was a bedstead made of poles stuck in the cracks of the logs in one corner of the cabin, the other ends being supported by forked sticks sunk in the earthen floor. On the poles some boards were laid, upon which was thrown a covering of leaves, and these in turn were covered with skins and old clothes. For cooking utensils the family possessed a Dutch oven and a skil-

let. There was a loft in the upper part of the cabin; but, as this shiftless pioneer had not made either stairs or ladder, little Abe was obliged to climb to his perch at night by pegs driven into the logs.

The children were no better cared for than the house. They were ill-clad, ill-fed, untaught and harshly treated. The father, naturally disposed to indolence, found it so easy to subsist in that rich country by his rifle, with which he was extremely expert, and from his patch of corn and potatoes, which his wife and children cultivated, that he

gave way to his natural disposition, and passed the time, when not hunting, in telling stories to his neighbors. He was the great story-teller of the country, a character in much request on the frontier in early days.

Some readers have doubtless visited the richly-wooded parks of Germany, France or England, where the game is carefully preserved, where droves of clean, glistening black pigs and herds of deer are seen, and where, as you walk along, there is heard at every step the rustle of the startled hare, and where broods of partridges are following their mother in search of food, as tame as chickens. Now, it was as easy for the settler to subsist his family in this Indiana forest as it would be for one of the huntsmen to live in a large park, if he could shoot as much game as he liked. Thomas Lincoln, therefore, being such as he was, destitute of ambition either for himself or his children, took life very easily, and any one acquainted with the family would have foretold for Abraham no greater destiny than that of a squatter on the frontier, or a flat-boat hand on one of the rivers.

A terrible and mysterious epidemic swept over that country, called the milk-disease, one of the numerous maladies caused by the settlers' total disregard of sanitary conditions. One of the victims was Nancy Lincoln, the wife of Thomas and mother of Abraham. The husband, who had been her only nurse and only physician, was now her undertaker, also. He sawed and hammered some green boards into a long box. The few neighbors, about twenty in all, carried and followed the remains to a little eminence half a mile away, and they buried her in the virgin soil of the wilderness. There was no ceremony performed at her funeral, because there was no one competent to perform it. Some months after, when a roving preacher came along, Thomas Lincoln induced him to preach a funeral sermon for his wife, and thus his omission was made good.

Thirteen months passed. The widower, who was not disposed to be both father and mother, started for his native Kentucky in quest of a wife, and there

he found Sally Bush, who had once rejected his suit, and had married his rival Johnstone and was now a widow with three children. He called upon her and proposed without beating about the bush.

"Well, Mrs. Johnstone," said Thomas, "I have no wife and you no husband. I came to propose to marry you. I knowed you from a gal and you knowed me from a boy. I have no time to lose, and if you are willing, let it be done straight off."

"Tommy," was her reply, "I know you well, and have no objections to marrying you; but I cannot do it straight off, as I owe some debts that must be paid first."

The ceremony was performed the next morning, the debts having been paid in the meantime, and very speedily the married pair and all the goods that the widow possessed were placed upon a wagon and drawn by four horses, a journey of some days, to Thomas Lincoln's cabin in Indiana. These goods were of considerable value. There was a bureau that cost \$40, at which Thomas considered sinfully magnificent, and urged her to sell it. But she was no Lincoln, and she refused to do this. There was a table, a set of chairs, a large clothes chest, some cooking utensils, knives and forks, bedding and other articles essential to civilized living.

Abraham Lincoln never forgot the wonder and delight with which he beheld the arrival and unpacking of this wagon load of unimagined treasure. Neither he nor his sister had ever heard of such things. The mother, on her part, was woefully disappointed on seeing the wretched cabin in which she was to pass her days; for it seems that Thomas Lincoln had drawn on his imagination in describing his abode; and, indeed, the rude hovel was a great advance upon the half-enclosed wigwam in which he had lived during his first year's residence in the wilderness.

Sally Bush, unlettered as she was, had in her some of the best qualities of a civilized being. She was a natural enemy of chaos and all disorder. She was a woman of high principle, genuine intelligence and good sense. She, therefore, accepted the dismal lot to which Thomas Lincoln had brought her and at once set about making the best of it.

She made her idle husband put a floor in the cabin; then windows and doors, welcome appendages in that cold month of December. She made up warm beds for the children, now five in number by the addition of her three. The little Lincolns, even in that wintry season, were half-naked, and she clothed them from fabrics saved from her own



wardrobe. They never had been used to cleanliness; she washed them, and taught them how to wash themselves. They had been treated to hardness; she opened her heart to them, treated them as she did her own children, and made them feel that they had a mother. Moreover, she had a talent, not merely

for industry, but for making the most of everything. She was a good economist, a good manager, very neat in her own person, orderly and regular in her housekeeping. The whole aspect of the home, within and without, was changed; even the land was better cultivated, and Thomas Lincoln was a somewhat less dilatory provider.

Happily, too, she took a particular liking to Abe, then 9 years old, utterly ignorant, wholly-uninformed, but good-humored and affectionate. He became warmly attached to her, and, as she often said, never once disobeyed her or gave her a disrespectful reply. She had him nicely dressed in new clothes from head to foot, and it appeared to make a new boy of him. Being now decently clad he could attend school, which he had never previously done, and very soon he showed those indications of intelligence which led to his entering the profession of the law. Sometimes the boy had to walk four miles and a half to school, and when he reached it, the instruction given was not of a very high quality. Every winter, however, added something to his knowledge and widened his views.

His gratitude to this excellent woman was pleasing to witness. He used to speak of her as his "saintly mother," of his "angel of a mother," of "the woman who first made him feel like a human being," who taught him that there was something else for him in the world besides blows, ridicule and shame. After his father's death he paid a mortgage on the farm, assisted her children, and sent her money as long as he lived.

After he was elected to the Presidency and before he started to Washington, he paid her a visit. She was then very old and infirm, and he marked the change in her appearance. She had been a very tall woman, straight as an Indian, handsome, sprightly, talkative, with beautiful hair that curled naturally; she was now bent and worn with labor and sorrow, and he bade her farewell, with a presentiment that he would see her no more. She, too, was oppressed with a vague fear of the future. When Mr. Herndon, the law-partner of Mr. Lincoln, visited her after the assassination of the President, she was

not able to speak to him without tears.

"Abe," said she, "was a good boy, and I can say what scarcely one woman in a thousand can say: Abe never gave me a cross word or look, and never refused in fact or appearance to do anything I requested of him. His mind and mine, what little I had, seemed to run together. I had a son, John, who was married with Abe. Both were good boys, but I must say, both now being dead, that Abe was the best boy I ever saw. I did not want Abe to run for President; did not want him elected; was afraid somehow; and when he came down to see me after he was elected, I still felt that something would befall Abe, and that I should see him no more."

She died soon after, and lies buried in an obscure grave, while the son whom she rescued from squalor, ignorance and degradation, has a monument which pierces the skies. The much-maligned sisterhood of step-mothers might well combine to place a memorial for her tomb.—*James Parton.*

STILL 300 YEARS



# "She Was a Stepmother"—Sally Bush

From This Woman Lincoln Received That Inspiration Which Led Him On;  
She Sent Him to School and "Encouraged and Urged Him to Study"

By THOMAS J. MALONE

*Seen in 1921 2-6-25*

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The Thomas Lincoln house in Indiana was much like the houses Sally Bush had known him to have in and around Elizabethtown. It was the conventional one-room log cabin, without floor, door or windows. What she would have thought and said and done if her husband had brought her to the old half-faced camp, which still stood a few steps away, one does not know; but one can feel safe in believing that she would have buckled to and made the best of it. That is just what she did in the actual circumstance. If she had been led to expect better things, she did not moon over what she found. She was in what today's parlance calls "a good sport."

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Speedily the new Mrs. Lincoln got Tom Lincoln going. In no time that indifferently capable carpenter, assisted no doubt by the boys, had put in a floor where no floor had been, hung a door and cut holes for windows, which were then covered with greased paper for panes. The Lincoln children slept in real beds, warm, comfortable, happy in the care of the new mother who took the place of the well-loved other and filled it so competently through all the succeeding years.

Abe could read—his own mother had taught him that—but he could do little beyond reading. He had had a few weeks of schooling in Kentucky; the new mother wanted him to have more. For a few months that very year, the children were sent to the nearest school, a mile and a half away, and again three years later. When seventeen, Abe went a short time to another school four and a half miles away; but the distance, and the father's conviction that his services were needed at home or among the neighbors, prevented his keeping on.

She urged him to study. Other stepmothers, doubtless, have loved their foster-children, have been kind to them, but here was specific service in the direction most needed.

His study, it will be recalled, consisted in the reading, re-reading and in great part committing to memory of every book he could lay his hands on. A few books he owned, but the rest he borrowed in the neighborhood, that often-quoted galaxy including the Bible, Aesop, "The Pilgrim's Progress," Weems' "Life of Washington," Shakespeare, Burns, and a school history of the United States. These he would read aloud to the home folks, when they would listen to him, and his mother, at least, always would.

She understood that boy, saw good stuff in him and, like all loving mothers, thought he would make something of himself, might even become a great man. There must have been many times in those ten years of haphazard "growing up" when Abe was downhearted over his progress toward education, as he often became later. Who but his mother was there in that house to cheer him on, strengthen his resolution, bolster his faith in himself, to "encourage and urge him to study?"

Little, too little is known about her. Much of her life was passed in small towns and rural places on the western frontier, a life like millions of other lives in humble walks—poor, circumscripted, toiling, handicapped, obscure. But ten years of that life were of transcendent value to her country and to the world. In those ten years she was the chief influence in developing the boy who was to be the towering figure of his age. Her days in that decade were taken up with the endless duties of housewifery in a large family, in a rude one-room house that had none of today's conveniences. She was uneducated, as the world defines education, but she had character.

She was the stepmother of Abraham Lincoln. What she thought in those months and years of drudgery; what dreams she had, if she had dreams; what visions saw, if any, we do not know. With a husband who did not share her interest and her faith, in a neighborhood that placed no stock in book learning, she somehow kept aglow for that boy the light of ambition and effort. In her mother's heart she nursed her own counsel, but we have the son's testimony of what her love and care, her trust and encouragement, meant to him.

In those ten somber years of a boyhood spent in choring, grubbing, woodchopping, corn cropping, hog butchering and fence making, at home or "hired out," she gave the young Abraham the three things he most needed—love and trust and encouragement. And in what did she encourage him? In a thinly settled land of illiterate adults, of few and poor schools, of few books and few newspapers, of mediocre aspirations, she encouraged, yes, urged him to study! Nothing else goes so far to explain the most enigmatical character in American history, to point the mainspring motivating that growth of a neglected, half-wild, uncouth rustic to the man who continues to be the marvel of each new generation.

And she was a stepmother!

The glory of her shines upon the stepmothers of today and of tomorrow in this land, in all lands. In her woman's keeping was the fate of America, perhaps even of peoples everywhere aspiring to be free.

She first appears in history as Sally Bush, a young woman living in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, whom Thomas Lincoln had met before his marriage to Nancy Hanks. The Bushes are reputed to have been a family somewhat superior to the gen-





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Dear Sir: 2-6-25

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She first appears in history as Sally Bush, a young woman living in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, whom Thomas Lincoln had met before his marriage to Nancy Hanks. The Bushes are reputed to have been a family somewhat superior to the general run of folk about them. Sally, a tall, light-complexioned girl of pleasing appearance and especial neatness in dress, is said to have "held her head high." She refused Thomas' suit and married, instead, one Daniel Johnston, the town jailer, who seems to have had a steady job. Right there Daniel drops out of the record, except indirectly. A few years later he dropped out of life entirely, leaving Sally Bush Johnston free to do the thing that was to give her a distinguished place among the women of all time—to become, by marrying the bereft Thomas Lincoln, the stepmother of Nancy Hanks' lonely and misunderstood son.

Abraham's mother had died in his tenth year, scarcely two years after their moving from Kentucky to Indiana. Whether of the "milk sickness" or tuberculosis, the year the family had spent in that "half-faced camp"—a wretched lot of poles, open on one side—probably had something to do with it. After thirteen months of widowhood, Thomas Lincoln left the boy, his thirteen-year-old sister, Nancy, and their cousin Dennis Hanks, in the later teens, who was living with them, and went back to Elizabethtown to try his luck again with the Widow Johnston.

Mrs. Johnston had liked "Tommy" Lincoln and she was lonely. Also, she had three children of her own to bring up. This time she said yes. There have been unpleasant stories that Lincoln made out to her that he was more prosperous in Indiana than he really was—but when does a suitor black-eye himself anyhow?

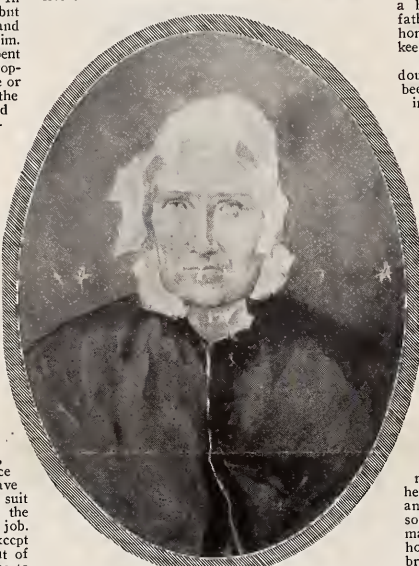
What a moving that was in December of 1819, of the Johnston possessions to the Lincoln cabin in Indiana! A four-horse wagon it took, loaded with those household stores that to the little asking, easily contented Thomas Lincoln seemed almost sinful in their grandeur and to the Lincoln children marvelous indeed—a table, chairs, that famous and much-written-about bureau, pillows and other bedding, cooking utensils, and even knives and forks.

Let credit be given where deserved, even though belated: those possessions were probably the result, at least in part, of the industry and thrift of that Daniel Johnston of unpraised memory. He had a vicarious share in the rejuvenation of the Lincoln home that ensued, an honorable part in contributing to the comfort and happiness and

inspiration which the young Abraham knew from the day of his widow's arrival.

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MRS. THOMAS LINCOLN (Sally Bush)

and comfort and self-respect. Little John Johnston's spare garments were put on the lanky Abe. Matilda and Sarah Johnston's wardrobe jointly contributed to bedeck—is that the word?—his sister. Thomas Lincoln was not a self-starter. Now he had the influence needed to get him started and make him go, however spasmodically, a firm but kindly "boss" who should hold him to a standard of living for which, left to himself, he had no hankering. There was a woman in the house.

This was the combined Lincoln-Johnston family in that one-room Indiana cabin: father, mother, Sarah (formerly Nancy) Lincoln, Abraham, their cousin Dennis Hanks, John D. Johnston, and his two sisters. Four years later John Hanks, another cousin, was taken in and lived with them four years.

What would follow in like case today; in many, if not most, cases in any day? Jealousies, rivalries, neglect, favoritism, abuse, wrangling, coldness, what not!

But what characterized the newly enlarged home at Little Pigeon Creek? Love and fairness and kindness and good will, a directing spirit that realized duty and accepted responsibility, that rose above the squalor and the heart-sickening conditions and shaped the meager instrument of a seemingly blind chance into a power that preserved the Union of States, freed the Negro, exalted the common man and the thoughts and purposes of common men, and gave the enduring proof of the equality of opportunity that is America.

There was a woman in the house, a house that was not divided against itself.

These are the adjectives which those who knew her best applied to her: thoughtful, energetic, sen-

sible, sprightly, talkative, handsome, industrious, neat, tidy, pure, decent, kind-hearted, charitable, pious. That pre-eminently good woman, Sally Bush," writes Lamon.

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How the boy Lincoln studied, his stepmother herself has told us: how in his reading he would jot down on boards, if without paper, any matter that seemed particularly worthwhile—sometimes the full passage, sometimes only a few marks—guarding the boards until he had paper; how he would then rewrite it, repeat it, and often bring it and read it to her, seeking her opinion; how he had "a kind of scrapbook" for safekeeping of such things as especially interested him.

Her relations with her stepson were summed up in a historic interview, after his death, given to one of his biographers. She said that Abraham had never given her a cross word or look, nor refused to do anything she asked him to do, that she had never spoken crossly to him in all her life, that his mind and hers "seemed to run together."

After Mr. Lincoln left the family home in 1830, on passing his majority, he continued until his death an affectionate interest in his mother's welfare, going to see her occasionally, sending her money at times and paying her what he owed to be a last visit when President-elect before going to Washington.

What would not a diary by this woman, of those ten years from 1820 to 1830, mean to an American who still seeks to understand the miracle of Abraham Lincoln? But she kept no diary; her time was taken up with more immediate and pressing occupation. No one has written her biography; the known facts of her life have seemed too few and too commonplace. Some years ago Robert Todd Lincoln, grandson of her and Thomas Lincoln, placed a modest stone over their graves in a country cemetery in Coles County, Illinois. More recently the Lions' Club of Illinois erected, for them both, a more pretentious marker there.

There should be a monument to her alone reared, not by relative nor by specific organization nor by government, but by all the people of the United States who hold dear the life and service of Abraham Lincoln and who would honor the memory of the noble woman whose nurturing made him what he was. And its inscription should be, without fulsome detail:

TO THE WORLD'S GREATEST  
STEPMOTHER

She Loved Abraham Lincoln,  
And She Urged Him to Study



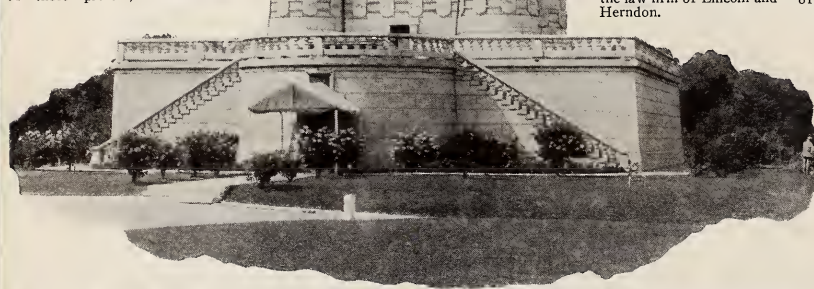
THEY came from all over the world, the 101,000 who visited the tomb of Lincoln between the first of January of 1924 and November 1 of that same year. And each year the number is increasing. Mr. Fay, the custodian of the Lincoln Memorial, says. "They come from the Orient, they come from Russia, France, England, Germany—everywhere. They come in delegations, and they come on their honeymoons; they come in excursions of school children, and in college groups. Negroes come, and whites come, every day. Our register reads like a list of the great of the contemporary writers, statesmen, and world-leaders; a Who's Who of the world."

In Springfield one sees the Presbyterian church and the pew in which Lincoln sat.

The next stop is the room in which Lincoln delivered the classic "House Divided Against Itself" address. This room is preserved as a part of the great legislative halls of the capitol building and is a shrine to all lovers of Lincoln.

Then near the Wabash Railway freight depot a stone with a bronze plaque marks the spot where Lincoln stood on the rear platform of a railroad car and delivered his famous farewell to Springfield address, an utterance replete with humble awe and prophetic foreboding.

I talked with several men who heard that address and while there is a difference of opinion among them as to the exact phraseology of this address, they all agree on its spirit. (It is true that the address, in the form we have it, was written by Mr. Lincoln on his knee, directly the train started.) There had been some enemies in Springfield. Lincoln knew that they were present. But most of those present were friends and neighbors. In this beautiful address, with carefully chosen phraseology, Lincoln bound enemies and friends alike, together in love and good will. I was told that most of those present, enemies and



The Lincoln tomb, visited last year by more than 101,000 persons between January 1 and November 1. David Lloyd George, Clemenceau, Joffre, the King and Queen of Belgium, Nansen, the explorer; Padlewski, Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Coolidge, and others have signed the register.

friends, wept at these simple, sincere words of farewell; that there was a subtle spirit in the very atmosphere, and that Lincoln seemed to feel the weight of coming events. The look on his face was that of loneliness.

Then there is the tomb of Lincoln, the great shrine of the city of Springfield. A dozen floral wreaths were lying about that tomb. Two were from Mr. Coolidge, one while he was Vice-President, and one after he became President. One was from David Lloyd George. The actual tomb is in the crypt, where he buried, besides Lincoln, the wife and deceased children of Lincoln.

I have never stopped at the Lincoln shrine, winter or summer, when it has not been crowded with people.

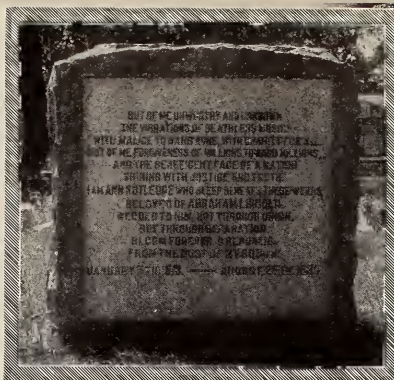
One of the curious autographs that Mr. Fay owns is that of the shortest poem ever written on Lincoln. It was given by Joaquin Miller, and it sums up Lincoln's strength in two tremendous lines:

"LINCOLN

Joaquin Miller

The strength of Hercules  
The sense of Socrates."

Concord, N.H., 1924



The grave of Ann Rutledge with a memorial written by Edgar Lee Masters.

years. He lies upon a cot, with a radio outfit within reach, and when he grows lonely or tired of reading he reaches over, as he himself said to me, "and connects up with the earth." He heard President Coolidge. In such a way millions might have heard Lincoln, had inventive genius been as advanced in that day as it is now.

Mr. Rankin knew Lincoln from boyhood when he was a page in the Illinois legislature, and later when he was a partner in the law firm of Lincoln and Herndon.

He reached over and showed me an autograph album, procured when that was as much of a fad as the crossword puzzle is now. One day he walked into Lincoln's office with this book in his hand.

Mr. Lincoln saw the book and said, "Mr. Rankin, what is that book?" He was always interested in a new book.



The Lincoln home, where the martyred President lived for several years and where he received the news of his nomination.

Says Mr. Rankin, "I told him that it was an autograph album and that I would be glad to have him put his name in it."

"Did he do it?" I asked eagerly. For answer Mr. Rankin opened the book. There upon a page was the autograph given that day.

"Today, Feb. 23—1858, the owner honored me with the privilege of writing the first name in this book—

A. Lincoln."

Below that there is another autograph, that of William H. Herndon, Lincoln's law partner and it reads more flourishingly:

"The struggles of this age and succeeding ages for God and man—Religion—Humanity, and Liberty with all the complex and grand relations—may they triumph and conquer forever, is my ardent wish and most fervent soul-prayer."

Wm. H. Herndon."

Feb. 23rd. 1858.

No other autographs were ever entered in this book. I was permitted, at the offices of the John T. Stuart law firm, to read a shoe-box-full of Lincoln correspondence, most of which has never been published, because of the personal matters therein discussed.

These letters reveal a little-known side of Lincoln which will be very interesting when the time comes that they can be released.

I was permitted to have a copy of a part of one of these letters which I understand gives these sentences the first light of publication. This letter was a letter from Mary Lincoln, and the excerpt I have reads:

"To Honorable John T. Stuart, Springfield, Illinois

"My dear Cousin:

Owing to much indisposition during the past year and while in Canada for months, seldom seeing an American paper, the controversy which appears to have been going on regarding my great and good husband's religious views, have entirely escaped me.

My husband's heart was naturally religious—he had often described to me his noble mother reading to him at a very early age from her Bible, the prayer she offered up for him, that he should become a pious boy and man, and . . . what an acceptable book that great book was always to him. In our family bereavement it was there he first turned for comfort. Sabbath morning he accompanied me to hear dear, good old Dr. Smith preach and . . . his last words to his dear friends on leaving Springfield for Washington with an impending rebellion before

the country were words uttered in great anxiety and sadness, 'Pray for me.' These words revealed his heart.

Very truly yours,

Mary Lincoln."

From here we go to Lincoln's home; the house in which he lived until he left for Washington. Here is the room in which he received the word of his nomination; the room reproduced in John Drinkwater's great play on Lincoln.

One photograph displayed here showed a great crowd in front of this house celebrating Lincoln's nomination. It was a delegation from Kansas and they had a large sign, reading:

"WON'T YOU LET US IN KANSAS!"

In addition to fifteen Lin



# FROM THE TRIBUNE'S COLUMNS

Chicago Daily Tribune

Feb. 12 - 1926

## 65 YEARS AGO TODAY

FEBRUARY 12, 1861.

INDIANAPOLIS. — Abraham Lincoln's journey from Springfield, his home since 1837, on his way to the nation's capital for inauguration, has been an ovation throughout. At Springfield a large crowd gathered to see him off. To it he said: "My friends: No one not in my situation can appreciate my feelings of sadness at this parting. To this place and the kindness of this people I owe everything. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon the shoulders of Washington. Without the aid of the Divine Being, who ever aided him, who controls mine and all our destinies, I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in him who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will be yet well. To his care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you, friends and neighbors, an affectionate farewell."

SPRINGFIELD.—The last business done by Mr. Lincoln on Saturday was to put into the hands of an intimate friend, a senator, a handsome sum of money for the benefit of his aged step-mother in Coles county.

NASHVILLE. — Secession has been squelched in Tennessee. So far as heard from all the Union candidates have been elected and the proposal for a state convention has been defeated by a decisive majority.

WASHINGTON. — Representative Craige of North Carolina introduced a resolution "that the President be required to recognize the independence of the southern confederacy as soon as official information of its establishment be received."

## 25 YEARS AGO TODAY

FEBRUARY 12, 1901.

CHICAGO.—Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, daughter of the late John de Koven, will erect a low price model tenement building at Halsted and Ewing streets on property recently granted to Hull House by Miss Helen Culver. The building will contain 100 rooms to be rented to the worthy poor at \$3 per month.

CHICAGO.—With scarcely any opposition the once bitterly fought Lake Shore track elevation ordinance was passed by the city council. Two of the most dangerous grade crossings in the city will be eliminated—at Polk and Harrison streets—and conditions on which building of the new Lake Shore and Rock Island station, to cost \$2,000,000, depends will be met.

WASHINGTON. — Representative Babcock of Wisconsin introduced a bill

to repeal the tariff on iron and steel products, his object being to cut down profits of the billion dollar steel trust and end a monopoly.

NEW YORK.—Mark Twain presided at the Lincoln memorial meeting in Carnegie Hall. Henry Watterson of Louisville was the principal speaker.

VIENNA.—Ex-King Milan of Serbia is dead at the age of 46. After a reign of wars and domestic scandals, including a divorce from Queen Natalie, he abdicated in 1889 in favor of his son, Alexander, the present king.

CHICAGO.—Otto William Meysenburg, long a factor in the industrial growth of Chicago, died from typhoid fever on his ranch in Alma, Cal., where he had been staying for the last two months. He was the founder of the Siemens-Halske Electric company and was its president until 1896. He was 51 years old.

## 10 YEARS AGO TODAY

FEBRUARY 12, 1916.

MADISON, Wis.—William H. Orpet, a junior at the University of Wisconsin, broke down and confessed to knowledge of the death by poisoning of Marion Lambert, the Lake Forest High school girl whose body was found in the snow in a woods on the Harold F. McCormick estate at Lake Forest. Orpet said he met the girl in the woods near the Sacred Heart academy on the morning of Feb. 9 after writing her a letter. He said she pleaded two hours with him to renew a friendship with her and he declined. Then he left her, he said. Following this she swallowed the prussic acid which caused her death. He returned to Madison and wrote her a letter that would be delivered at her home after the body was found, and also prepared an alibi to show he was not in Lake Forest. He would not admit he actually saw the girl die.

CHICAGO.—The poisoning of more than 100 prominent persons at the banquet for Archbishop Mundelein at the University club night before last was not the result of ptomaines as at first believed, but the deliberate act of an employé of the chef's department of the club, according to a statement given out by H. J. Doherty, manager of the club. Analysis indicates that arsenic was the poison used. The suspected employé has disappeared.

LONDON.—A Berlin official statement claims that a British cruiser has been sunk by a German torpedo boat on the Dogger bank, 120 miles east of the English channel. The British press bureau denies it.

CHICAGO.—Charles L. Allen of the law firm of Herrick, Allen & Martin is dead at the age of 67. His senior partner, John J. Herrick, died two weeks ago.



# LINCOLN'S LAST VISIT.

From Eagle 3-2-29

Mrs. Caroline M. Newman, Charleston, Ill., daughter of the late Dr. N. S. Freeman, Farmington, was born October 6, 1852, and is enjoying splendid health considering her age. She was a resident of Farmington until 1873, the village at that time having a population of about 300.

Although only about ten years of age she distinctly remembers the occasion of the last visit of Abraham Lincoln to his step-mother, Sarah Bush Lincoln, in February, 1861, a few days previous to his departure for Washington to be inaugurated president of the United States.

Mrs. Newman states: He came to Farmington with Col. A. H. Chapman, and they went to the log cabin and brought his stepmother to the home of Mrs. Matilda Moore, a daughter of Mrs. Lincoln. During the absence of Mr. Lincoln Mrs. Moore hurriedly paid Mrs. N. S.



Freeman a visit and excitedly said, "Abe has come and I cannot give him his dinner as I have hardly a thing in the house to eat." Mrs. Freeman said, "You must," and gave her some beef, bread, butter and other articles of food and aided her in carrying the supply to Mrs. Moore's home. As soon as the situation became known several others contributed to the relief of the embarrassing situation.

On their return with his step-mother, the meal was ready and I watched the ladies serve dinner; two girls waited on the table, Miss Dovie Purcell afterwards Mrs. John Wagner, and Miss Lib Miner, afterwards Mrs. Ralph Osborn.

When it became generally known that the president elect was in the village school was dismissed; many assembled to give him welcome; Oliver Harris being away the store was forcibly entered and drums and fifes were secured and while martial music was being played they picked up Mr. Lincoln and

carried him about the front yard at Mrs. Moore's residence.

I was deeply impressed with Mr. Lincoln's kindly treatment of the school children. Among those present on that notable occasion were: George T. Balch, Thomas Allison, Mrs. Emma Allison Miner, Mrs. Mary Ann Killough, all living. When he noticed that Emma Allison had her hand bandaged from an injury and feeling sorry for her picked her up and kissed her. Afterwards he took five-year old Laura Catlin on his lap and kissed her, at the same time making some kindly remark.

I was in the room when Mr. Lincoln was getting ready to take his farewell of his stepmother, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. On the bed was the fur cape which he had brought her as a present; Sarah Bush Lincoln was seated in a rocking chair near him and while he was talking to those who were in the room one of his hands clasped the rocking chair in which she was seated and the elbow of the other arm rested on the mantle piece. When in repose his face presented a very sad appearance, but when he smiled a radiance passed all over his countenance. When the time came for him to bid his stepmother good-bye he put his arm gently about her, and it was at this time that she uttered those prophetic words, "Abe, I'll never see you alive again. They will kill you."

This parting scene between Abraham Lincoln and Sarah Bush Lincoln are as vivid in my memory as if the event had but taken place yesterday, and that was nearly 68 years ago.

The house where this scene took place is the one now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. O. L. Annis in Farmington. In 1861 Mrs. Matilda Moore lived there, but afterwards she sold the place and moved to a rude one-room log cabin just south of our residence, where she took in washings. In this cabin she lived until her death. The foundation rocks are still on the ground and is at present owned by Albert Veach.

My father was the physician for Thomas Lincoln and family; and he and Abraham Lincoln were the closest personal friends.

The Sally Lincoln Chapter, D. A. R., Charleston, was named for Sarah Bush Lincoln.



The Thos. Lincoln Log Cabin.



# Guards Grave of the Lincolns

ESSIE REAMS In Illinois Central Magazine, February, 1927.

*June Eagle 8-29-31*

The growth of the railroads of our country is so closely interwoven with the growth of the country itself that it is impossible to separate the two. Our own great railroad is no exception. Most of the territory served by the Illinois Central System is rich in traditions and historical lore. Coles county and Mason county, Illinois, for example, served by the Illinois Central System were the scenes of the early activities of one of the greatest and most beloved characters in our history—Abraham Lincoln—during his young manhood, when he studied and practiced law and entered political life.

In studying the lives of great men, it is fitting for a moment to consider their parents and become better acquainted with them. In Shiloh Cemetery, near Janesville, Ill., about eleven miles south of Mattoon, in the shadow of a little country church, are buried Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln, father and step-mother of the martyred president. Their graves, until the last two or three years, were practically forgotten except by a faithful few living in that vicinity. These few in November, 1922, formed the Shiloh Lincoln Memorial Club to care for the graves. Mrs. Susan D. Baker, 76 years old, mother of our local surgeon at Mattoon, Dr. J. G. Baker, helped to organize the Memorial Club and is now its president.

## Care of Cemetery Her Life Work

Born and reared in the vicinity of this little cemetery, Mrs. Baker has for years taken care of the graves herself. Her life work is to have a perpetual care fund established or to have the place made a national cemetery. During the last few years she has been able to see the beginning of the realization of her hopes.

It is most interesting to visit the neat little white farmhouse at Janesville where Mrs. Baker lives with her daughter and son-in-law. She is a sweet-faced little old lady, whose eyes are now dimmed to almost total blindness and whose body is frail, but whose spirit remains undaunted. A fire of determination still burns brightly within her to work on the last for her cause.

The land where Shiloh Cemetery is now located was entered in 1836 by a Mr. Summer and a few years later was bought by Isaac W. Rodgers, father of Mrs. Baker, who in turn deeded the land over to three trustees to be used as a cemetery. It was then known as the Gordons Cemetery. Later on a new cemetery was started at Janesville and was also called Gordons; so the older one became known as Shiloh, after the church near which it is located.

Every year funds were obtained by subscription from the hard-working farmers in the community to care for the cemetery, but every year, owing to the death of so many of the older people, the fund has become smaller and smaller. Outside help must now be depended upon to care for it.

In 1880 a monument was erected by popular subscription, but it was inscribed with the name of Thomas Lincoln only, not including the name of Mrs. Lincoln, who lay beside him. This omission grieved Mrs. Baker considerably, and rightly so, as it is well known what a tremendous influence Mrs. Lincoln was in the life of her step-son. Moreover, the monument was chipped so much by souvenir hunters as to become hopelessly defaced.

## New Monument Dedicated

In the spring of 1923, Wayne C. Townley of Bloomington, Ill., district governor of the Lions' Club of Illinois, while visiting the Lions' Club of Mattoon, paid a visit to the cemetery and to Mrs. Baker. Not even a trail was marked at this time to guide visitors to the spot. The matter was called to the attention of the Mattoon Lions' Club, the members of which immediately became active. The trail from Mattoon to Shiloh Cemetery was marked by using an orange circle, in which were printed in dark blue the letters "T. L. T." (Thomas Lincoln Trail). Also \$3,000 was raised by the Lion of the state, and a suitable monument was erected and dedicated on February 12, 1924. It is to be regretted that even now there is no paved road leading to this spot, not even a well oiled one, so that in the winter it is almost impossible to visit the place.

After making their home in Mason County, near Decatur, Ill., the Lincolns

moved in 1831 to a little farm two miles southwest of Lerna, Ill. About four years later they moved to a place about two miles east of Janesville, where they lived until the death of Thomas Lincoln in January, 1851. Mr. Lincoln is described as being about 5 feet 8 inches tall, weighing about 160 pounds. He wore what would be long hair for a man today and no beard, Mrs. Baker declares positively that, contrary to the general ideal of him, Thomas Lincoln (or "Uncle Tommy," as he was called by his neighbors) was a good man, well liked by his neighbors and a great church goer, as he had been to her father's house many times to worship.

The name of Shiloh was given to the little church community in 1833, prior to the coming of the Lincolns. When the community was organized, in Mr. Rodgers' house, the members had no church building and met at one another's homes and in the summer under the trees. As was then usually the case, the social as well as the religious life of the little community centered around the church. In 1877 a church building was put up. In 1921 the present church, a brick structure, was built, but the old one still remains standing.

Mrs. Baker for many years has gathered data from the neighbors and others who knew the Lincolns personally, has jotted down dates and has kept an account of the information she has been able to obtain. She also has had some

interesting experiences of her own. In speaking of Abraham Lincoln, she says:

## Lincoln was Family Lawyer

"The first I know of Abraham Lincoln was when I was a very small girl, about six years old. He acted as my father's lawyer. Father owned a herd of horses which strayed a considerable distance from home and met another herd owned by a man named Steward. When the two herds parted to return to their own homes, one colt of my father's went with the other herd. One reason I can so well remember the incident is that I was particularly interested in this colt, as it was the only one we had, and we felt the loss very much. Father advertised for it and was informed that the colt was with Mr. Steward's herd. When he went to see it he recognized it, but Mr. Steward declared that it was one of his own and that he would not give it up. He was probably honest in his opinion, as he had not seen his herd for some time.

"Anyway, they decided to have a law suit, and father went to Charleston (the county seat) and hired Abe Lincoln, who was then riding circuit, as his lawyer. Lincoln told him to tie the colt and then to tie its mother a certain distance on one side of the colt and the mare from the other herd an equal distance on the other side of the colt



When untied, Lincoln said, the colt would go to its mother. This was done. When untied, the colt played around a bit and then made straight for its rightful mother. This evidence was used in court, and the colt was awarded to my father.

"The first time I saw Abraham Lincoln was on September 18, 1858, the day of the Lincoln-Douglas debate at Charleston. Everyone went for miles around who could possibly get there, and excitement ran high, because Abe was a farm boy, he was known to many in this vicinity, and his parents had lived here so long. We went in our spring wagon with the delegation from Farmington. In this delegation was a large spring wagon which the farmers in the community had worked long and hard constructing and decorating with red, white and blue. It was drawn by four horses and contained a group of girls, my sister among them, all wearing white dresses with pink caps and blue sashes. The girls who did not already own white dresses made them for the occasion.

"There were thrills a-plenty for me that day. When we reached the old Kickapoo bridge, we met Abraham Lincoln, who came down with the Mattoon delegation. He was riding in a covered buggy, which was in itself an unusual sight at that time. We all stopped, Lincoln's buggy right next to our wagon and Lincoln stepped out on the step of the buggy, so close to me I could have touched him, and said, referring to the wagon load of girls:

"Gentlemen, I thank you for this basket of flowers." I remember him well; he was tall and wore a large beaver hat.

"We went on to Charleston. Lincoln stopped in front of a house there, and a little old lady wearing a black cape stepped out, threw her arms around him and said, 'Oh, Abe, I always knew you would get to be president.' This was Sarah Bush Lincoln, and sure enough in two years her prediction came true. All these things remain so clear and vivid in my mind that it has always seemed to me God had a work for me to do.

"The next time I saw Lincoln he came to my father's house in February, 1861, before he was inaugurated, and asked my father to go with him to see his father's grave. They went over to the old cemetery, where Lincoln stood by his father's grave and wept, saying that the country was approaching a critical time and that he never expected to get back here again—and he never did.

### Unmarked Graves

"There was no marker at the grave, and they took a board and carved the initials 'T. E.' on it and placed it at the head, and the President-elect asked my father to look after the grave for him. Some say there never was a marker there but I know there was. They placed it

there that day, and it remained there for several years, as I saw it myself many times. They talked a long time, my father telling him that he hoped he would get along better in the future than he had in the past and that he would be able to keep his head above water (having reference to the story that Lincoln was almost drowned when a child, being rescued by his cousin.) When father told us what he had said, my mother was scandalized that he should have talked to a President elect in such a manner and took him to task for it. Even though my father was only a year old than Abe Lincoln, the latter called him "Uncle Ike."



## Stepmother of Abe Illiterate.

*Jersey Eagle May 16 1930*

Dear Sir:—Regarding the land which the State is taking for the Lincoln Memorial Park, the land actually was owned by Abraham Lincoln. It was conveyed to him by his father, Thomas Lincoln, with a reservation of a life estate, in his father and mother. Just why such a deed was made, is problematical. Deeds are frequently made this way, by a father to a son, but not often the other way.

From letters, passing between Thomas Lincoln and Abraham, one might be led to believe that it was done so that Thomas Lincoln could hold it free from debts, and have a home. It appears the son actually paid for it, paid some debts I believe, and having paid for it, he had a perfect right to fix it so his parents would have a home there, and a certainty of a home, as if the son had died without this, the father might have objected.

The deed is recorded in Record G on page 5 of the Coles County Deed Records. Sarah Bush Lincoln signed by mark. As your father remarked, some quarter of a century ago, it is clear that the step mother did not teach Abraham Lincoln to write. There are other conveyances signed by Sarah Bush Lincoln, executed by mark.

This signifies very little as a large per cent of the early settlers could not write. There have been many kings who could not write, hence the use of the signet.

As for the trial, it was a remarkably interesting case.

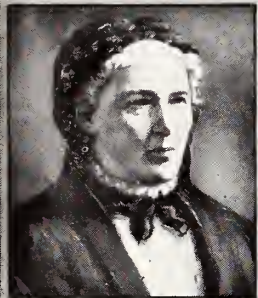
The law allows the owner full cash market value for any purpose. With the historical associations attached, this land might sell for \$10,000.00. But as no one has had any experience, in the sale of historical sites, evidence could not be obtained. If evidence had been offered, as to other historical sites, Roosevelt, Jefferson, and so forth, the court would have held the evidence too remote, in time and place. The court excluded the only witness the owner tendered, because he had no such experience.

The jury did the best they could and we are satisfied.

A. C. ANDERSON,  
In the Charleston Daily News.

# MOTHER'S DAY

MAY 11 TH.



MARY HILL WILLARD  
*Mother of Frances E. Willard*



MARGARET M. CARNEGIE  
*Mother of Andrew Carnegie*



SARAH BUSH LINCOLN  
*Step-mother of Abraham Lincoln*



VICTORIA MOOR COOLIDGE  
*Mother of Calvin Coolidge*



ELIZA TOMLINSON FOSTER  
*Mother of Stephen Collins Foster*



ABIGAIL SMITH ADAMS  
*Mother of John Quincy Adams*



MARY BALL WASHINGTON  
*Mother of George Washington*



MARTHA BULLOCH ROOSEVELT  
*Mother of Theodore Roosevelt*

MOTHERS FAMOUS PEOPLE REMEMBER



# Lincoln History Revealed in Letter

*Lerna Eagle - Lame St. - 5-2-1930*

The following is the conclusion of a letter written by Dr. W. H. Doak on Feb. 1, 1923, to Rev. W. D. Ewing, a nephew, of Cambridge, Ohio. It appeared in the Martinsville Planet on July 25, 1929.

(Concluded from last week)

Martinsville, Ill., Feb. 1, 1923.

The Lincoln Log Cabin Association bought the cabin in 1891 and shipped it to Chicago. However, before shipping it they sent here Mrs. Eleanor Gridley, a literary lady and newspaper correspondent for the purpose of gathering up all the items of interest possible about Thomas and Abraham Lincoln. She combed this neighborhood most thoroughly and published a book with the title: "The Story of Abraham Lincoln from Log Cabin to White House." Abraham Lincoln for more than half his life time, 1831 to 1861, made frequent visits here and formed a large acquaintance.

## Lincoln Laconics

When at work Thomas Lincoln wore buckskin suspenders and when wet they would get so stiff they would stand alone, and one of his young neighbors coming in one day said to him, "Grandpap, you haven't greased your galluses lately." This remark seemed to slightly nettle Mrs. Lincoln, and she told the young man that Thomas had a pair of suspenders for Sunday that she had made out of linen that she had raised and spun her self. Just think how our folks get their clothes—never one of them was so shiftless as to wear store shirts or coats either. We get our clothes from nature."

John Hall heard Abraham Lincoln say, "O how hard it is to die and not be able to leave the world any better for one's little life in it." Others have quoted this so often without giving him the credit. Again he heard him say: "My children are my happiness, and I feel that God is good to me for having conferred upon me the privilege of bringing into the world innocent children." Before going further I will tell you who John Hall was, for he is dead now. Soon after Abraham Lincoln's mother died in Indiana, Thomas Lincoln married Sarah Bush John-

son of Kentucky, a widow having three children, two girls and a boy. After these girls grew up, Dennis Hanks married one, and the father of John Hall married the other; thus Abraham Lincoln's step-mother was John Hall's grandmother. Although no blood relation they were close friends. It was at John Hall's that Mrs. Gridley wrote the first part of her book.

I suppose John Hall told Mrs. Gridley the exact facts about the story of an Indian killing Thomas Lincoln's father and of the narrow escape of little Thomas himself. When living in Kentucky Abraham Lincoln's grandfather took two of his sons, Mordecai and little Thomas six years old with him to the clearing where an Indian slipped up in a thicket and then ran for the boy hoping to take him prisoner, but Mordecai got to the boy first and ran with him to the house and got his rifle and shot at the Indian, seriously wounding him, but he got away.

Here is another. Mrs. Lincoln told her neighbors that they moved so often that it reminded her of the Children of Israel trying to find the Promised Land.

## Abe Lincoln's Melancholia

Mr. Hall said that Abraham Lincoln would sometimes go out in the woods by himself and stay a long time. Once he followed him to see what he was doing and saw him a long distance away leaning against a tree with his head bowed as though in deep meditation. Sometimes he was sad, as though the burden of the sorrows of the world was resting upon him, and would do but little talking; at other times he was cheerful. Every time he came home he would give his father money, and sometimes to his step mother. He often walked from Charleston that he might have more to give them.

Thomas Lincoln always called his son, "Abie." While he was a silent, quiet man there were at times flashes of wit and flashes of humor like glimpses of

sunshine in a shady place as in the three following instances told to me by Rev. R. H. Osborne who got them from his wife. Mr. Furry, a neighbor, was going along the road when he noticed him grubbing brush out of the fence corners, and said to him, "Grandpap, I thought your farm was for sale." "So it is, but I hain't going to let my farm know it." And again, it seems that Thomas had not consulted his wife about the wisdom of selling their farm, and when she heard about it she brought him up on the green, asking if it was true. "Yes," he replied, "I know of a farm for sale cheap on Indian Creek having bottom land and running water and I am anxious to try my luck over there." But his wife said to him, "I can see a good rea-

# STEPMOTHER OF ABE ILLITERATE

*Charleston Daily News May 1930*

Editor Daily News:

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A. C. ANDERSON.



# THE WOMAN OF IT

By Marguerite Mooers Marshall

Copyright Press Publishing Company (New York World) 1931

## LINCOLN



*All oratory still!*

*What lips shall speak? For whom?*

*Child! Lay a wreath upon*

*His mouldered tomb.*

*All eulogy is said:*

*All history complete.*

*We lay a formal wreath*

*At Freedom's feet.*

THOMAS L. GASKELL.

## What Lincoln's Stepmother Did for Him

**L**INCOLN'S BIRTHDAY is a day when women—men, too—might give a thought to stepmothers. Cinderella's stepmother branded the tribe with its bad name, yet she, after all, is a fairy tale. Lincoln's stepmother is sweet, sane, sound reality. The dispassionate student of his career has to admit—unless discounting altogether the effect of environment and early influences upon children—that Lincoln without his stepmother might never have become the great national leader. Nancy Hanks, his mother, is an honored name in American history. The name of Sally Bush, his stepmother, belongs beside it.

For Nancy Hanks died when Lincoln was only eight years old. She was, by all accounts, a tender and devoted parent. Some hint, too, that, from her unknown father, she transmitted to her son a strain of hereditary greatness of which there is no suggestion in Lincoln's own easy-going, provincial-minded father.

Yet all that Nancy Hanks could do for her boy ended pitifully soon, when he was hardly out of babyhood. All that was done for him after that, until he became a man grown, can be traced to the labor, the thought, the affection, the warm and wise personality of his stepmother.

**J**UST what did he owe to her? First and foremost, she not only encouraged him to get an education, she insisted upon it, over the contemptuous opposition of Thomas Lincoln, Abe's father. At the time of Sally Bush's marriage, it is said that she could not write her name. But, perhaps because pioneer conditions had denied schooling to her as to many women, she had a great belief in it, a burning ambition that "her boy"—as the stepson always was—should get the most and the best from books.

Besides exerting every effort to give Lincoln his education, his stepmother made for the lonely, awkward, growing youngster a home as comfortable as it could be in such primitive conditions. She cooked and cleaned and mended tirelessly, yet she was none of your nagging, fussy mothers. She apparently had a sense of humor which matched Abe's and could appreciate it. She valued, too, his natural honesty, his essential kindness, for she looked through the clumsy outer shell of personality to the essential fineness within.

Finally, Sally Bush Lincoln loved her stepson as—believe it or not—many a large-minded, large-hearted stepmother has loved the children not of her blood but of her care and affection. Between stepmother and stepson there was a deep, unbreakable bond of loyal devotion.

Lincoln was not too fortunate in his associations with women. His early love died. His wife had her good points but quarreled with him continually and could control neither

nerves nor extravagance. In his stepmother, however, he found all that his own mother might have given him had she lived. There is a legend that mothers who die young prefer, even to the joys of heaven, a little lingering near earth and their lonely children. Nancy Hanks, watching Sally Bush Lincoln in her place, must have sighed in glad relief at what she saw.

**I**F YOU would see the clear picture of Lincoln and his stepmother, you will find it in the pages of Carl Sandburg's "Abraham Lincoln," which many of us must continue to prefer to the new, iconoclastic "Lincoln the Man," by Edgar Lee Masters. Sandburg, writing of how Tom Lincoln brought home to his motherless children the second wife, Sally Bush, describes her as "a strong large-

boned, rosy woman, with a kindly face and eyes, with a steady voice, steady ways. The cheekbones of her face stood out and she had a strong jawbone; she was warm and friendly for Abe's little hands to touch, right from the beginning.

"As one of her big hands held his head against her skirt he felt like a cold chick warming under the soft feathers of a big wing.

"Abe Lincoln grows up," the tale goes on. "His father talks about the waste of time in 'edication'; it is enough to 'larn readin', writin', cipherin'." But," Sandburg testifies, "the stanch yearning stepmother, Sarah Bush Lincoln, comes between the boy and the father. And the father listens to the stepmother and lets her have his way." Abe got his "edication"—thanks to her.

**H**ERE'S another charming bit about her:

"His stepmother told him she didn't mind his bringing dirt into the house on his feet; she could

scour the floor; but she asked him to keep his head washed or he'd be rubbing the dirt on her nice white-washed rafters. He put barefoot boys to wading in a mud-puddle near the horse-trough, picked them up one by one, carried them to the house upside down, and walked their muddy feet across the ceiling. The mother came in, laughed an hour at the foot-tracks, told Abe he ought to be spanked—and he cleaned the ceiling so it looked new.

"Sally Bush, the stepmother, was all of a good mother to Abe." And she "tried to tell what there was between her and young Abe in saying, 'His mind and mine, what little I had, seemed to run together.'"

After his election to the presidency, before he left for his inauguration, he drove out to the old farm, to the log house he had helped build, in order to say good-by to his stepmother. This is Carl Sandburg's beautiful description of that last meeting.

"Sally Bush and he put their arms around each other and listened to each other's heartbeats. They held hands and talked, they talked without holding hands. Each looked into eyes thrust back in deep sockets. She was all of a mother to him.

"He was her boy more than any born to her. He gave her a photograph of her boy, a hungry picture of him standing and wanting, wanting. He stroked her face a last time, kissed good-by, and went away.

"He knew his heart would go roaming back often, that even when he rode in an open carriage in New York or Washington with soldiers, flags, and cheering thousands along the streets, he might just as like be thinking of her in the old log farmhouse out in Coles County, Illinois."

NEW YORK CITY EVE. WORLD  
FEBRUARY 12, 1931

(MOTHER, STEP-)



### Elbert Hubbard said:

**T**HEN one day Thomas Lincoln went away, and left the two children alone.

He was gone for a week, and when he came back he brought the children a stepmother—Sally Bush Johnston, a widow with three children of her own, but enough love for two more.

Her heart went out to little Abe, and his lonely heart responded. She brought provisions, dishes, cloth for clothing, needles to sew with, scissors to cut. She was a good cook. And best of all she had three books.

Up to this time, Abe had never worn shoes or cap. She made him moccasins, and also a coonskin cap, with a dangling tail.

She taught Abe and Sarah to read, their own mother having taught them the alphabet. She told them stories—stories of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. She told them of the great outside world of towns and cities where many people lived. She told them of the Capitol at Washington, and of the Government of the United States.

And they learned to repeat the names of these States, and write the names out with a burnt stick on a slab.

And little Abe Lincoln and his sister Sarah were very happy.

Their hearts were full of love and gratitude for their New Mother, and they sometimes wondered if anywhere in the wide world there were little boys and girls who had as much as they.

"All I am, and all I hope to be, I owe to my darling mother!" wrote Abraham Lincoln, years later.

And it is good to know that Sarah Bush Lincoln lived to see the boy evolve into the greatest man in America. She survived him four years.



## Sarah Bush Lincoln

1931

Charleston, Ill., April 11.—Perhaps the unpublished facts pertaining in any wise to the Lincolns are very few, says an article in Thursday's issue of the Charleston Courier. There has been discovered, it is believed, however, one which has never been published. Mrs. Sarah Chapman, who resides in Janesville, is perhaps the only woman yet living who helped "lay away" Sarah Bush Lincoln. Mrs. Chapman says she helped put Mrs. Lincoln in her coffin. Mrs. Chapman was at the time 14 years old and was living at home with her parents, who lived about a mile and half from the house where Mrs. Lincoln died, which was the home of her stepson, John Hall.

Mrs. Lincoln died in the house which was later moved to Springfield. Mrs. Chapman says that after Mrs. Lincoln was placed in the coffin, a pillow containing excelsior was placed under her head, and it being noticed there was no pillowslip on the pillow, a neighbor woman offered the use of a large white handkerchief, which offer was accepted.

Mrs. Chapman speaks well of Mrs. Lincoln's character. The funeral was held in the home where she died, the services being conducted by Rev. Aaron Lovins of Toledo, Ill., a minister of the Disciples of Christ denomination.





## "DON'T WORRY," SAID LINCOLN

Touching Story of Emancipator Revealed in Reminiscences of Cousin and Step-Niece.

(Globe-Democrat, of St. Louis.)

A simple, touching story of the last parting between Abraham Lincoln and his beloved step-mother, Mrs. Sarah Bush Lincoln, who reared him from the age of ten, is told in the hitherto unpublished reminiscences of the late Mrs. Sarah Louise Fox, Lincoln's second cousin and step-niece. Mrs. Fox died last December 12, at the home of a son, Alfred N. Fox, 8755 Natural Bridge Road. She was 91 and as a girl and young woman had known Lincoln well. She used to call him "Uncle Abe" long before he was a President of the United States, and she loved to tell how the gaunt rail-splitter had rocked her cradle with a roughly booted foot on the occasions of his visits with the kinfolks.

Recently as Mrs. Lillie Walton, a daughter of Mrs. Fox, was looking through a trunk full of Lincolniana belonging to Mrs. Fox, she came across a half-dozen pages of scribbled long-hand. The writing was none too firm, for Mrs. Fox had done it only a few years before she died. On these pages were told a few incidents concerning Lincoln that had been indelibly stamped in the cousin's mind.

She spoke of him simply and in the homely phrases he himself might have chosen. To her, Lincoln was not the man of high places, but a man of the soil and countryside. She did not think of him as a great man at least in her youth—but as a good man. The trappings of Washington, the pomp and ceremony of White House, have no part in her concept of the Emancipator.

She knew him rather as the man who helped his father, Thomas Lincoln, build a log cabin on the old Lincoln farm, near Campbell, Coles county, Ill. She knew him for his ability to hew rails out of tough, black locust. She knew him as a friend who, even when he felt the weight of a civil strife already burdening his shoulders, could find time to twit her, discuss crops with the neighboring farmers and preside amiably at a table groaning with turkey, crisp pies and roasting ears.

"I have been so busy reading what other people have to say about Lincoln," wrote Mrs. Fox, "I haven't had time to tell what I know about him or his greatness. I remember him as far back as I can remember anything.

"His dear old step-mother, whom he loved so well and who so dearly loved him, was my grand-mamma. Indeed, my father's mother was a sister of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's mother.

"He (Lincoln) came to see us often, and after Grand-father Lincoln (Thomas, Abe's father) died, his step-mother came to live with my mother. Uncle Abe, as we all called him, came to see his step-mother often. That is how I know they were so devoted to each other. He would stay three or four days, and when he started home she went to the door, put her hands on his shoulders and the tears would fall from her eyes like drops of rain. He would look at her and smile and say: 'Mother, don't do that; I will see you again.'"

"He did come again and again, till he was elected President of the United States. When he came a few days after the election, I think it was the happiest of her life. She was at my mother's house, of course, and mother was so happy. I was more than happy."

Mrs. Fox relates she was married August 30, 1860, and Abraham Lincoln was chosen President November 5, 1860. The day President-elect Lincoln came to visit them she refers to as the most joyful day in her existence.

"There was no way to get from Springfield to my mother's house," she wrote, "except in a cab. There were no railroad cars, no street cars. So he came from his home in Springfield by way of Charleston in the carriage. He had a driver and he was the only one in the cab."

"He invited me to get in and go down to see the old log cabin he helped his father build. (It was near the home of Mrs. Fox's mother.) Of course, I gladly accepted the invitation.

"I knew I was riding by the side of the best man in the world, but I didn't think of the honor he had achieved and the great honor it was for me to sit by his side. I merely thought of him as my Uncle Abe.

"I can remember how he drove up to the log cabin and how he helped me out and we went in. He talked to my eldest brother. He then bade him good-by and took me by the hand and led me to the cab. We drove from there to Shiloh cemetery, nearby, where his father was buried.

"He again helped me out and we viewed his father's resting place. There was only a slab with the name, 'Thomas Lincoln' and the date of his death. He looked sad when he took me back to the cab."

She then described their return to her mother's home. When they arrived they found virtually all the country-side had gathered in the house and the yard to welcome the President-elect. "There were people from every walk of life thereabouts. Ministers and rail-splitters came right from the wood." There were farmers with teams tucked into loamy boots, who had left plows and teams in the field to grip the hand of their President. There were women in their Sunday best, those who had time; and women in mussed and patched calico. Babies and children and gawky, grinning youths. She related the tall figure of Lincoln stood beside the door and shook the hand of each one as they passed into the house for dinner.

"The good women of the country and town" wrote Mrs. Fox, "brought their nicest cakes and pies, baked turkeys and chickens. My mother opened the doors of our large living room and set tables clear from one end of the house to the other."

She often told Mrs. Walton of how the men carried in carpenter's horses from the barnyard and covered them with great, long planks on which the feed was heaped until, in truth, the boards groaned. After the feast the people went to their homes and Lincoln "had a long talk with his old step-mother, my mother and myself."

"That," related Mrs. Fox succinctly, "was the last time we ever saw him alive.

"When he bid his mother farewell, she embraced him in her arms and said: 'My dear boy, I always thought there was something great in you. With this war coming on I am afraid you are going to have a hard time.'

"He said, 'Don't worry. Everything will come out all right'."

Mrs. Fox related that before Lincoln left he turned to her to ask about her recent marriage, remarking, "It doesn't seem so long since you were a little child."

"After he had accomplished everything," concluded the brief reminiscences, "they took his life. And, oh, how sad it was for his mother when she heard the news of his death. She lived with my mother until she, too, died. She was laid by the side of Thomas Lincoln in the Shiloh cemetery."

Mrs. Fox's brother, John Hall, lived on the Lincoln farm until his death in 1909. A niece of Mrs. Fox, Nancy Hall, now lives there. The old cabin Lincoln and his father built and in which his family and the Halls lived many years, was sent to Chicago World's Fair in 1893.

Mrs. Walton remembers the Lincoln cabin very well. She made frequent visits there in her childhood, while her "Uncle" John Hall lived there.

"Those," she smiles, "were still the days of corn popping and making molasses taffy. One of Lincoln's beds was still there, a four-poster with a trundle bed to roll underneath. Often I slept on the poster and on the trundle bed, too. No mattresses, you know, just slats. We used to use straw or feather beds to soften the hard wood."

Her father is also buried in Shiloh cemetery, about ten feet from the grave of Thomas Lincoln.

—The above was sent to us by W. S. Lamar, of St. Louis; a grandson of John S. Lamar, one of Spencer county's pioneer families.—Editor.



# Sarah Bush Johnston

## The Stepmother of Abraham Lincoln

(By R. Gerald McMurtry, Librarian  
Lincoln National National Life Foundation).

An Elizabethtown woman, the stepmother of Abraham Lincoln, is considered the most noble step-mother of all history. This famous character was Sarah Bush Johnston, who is credited with having had a tremendous influence upon Abraham Lincoln. She was born near Elizabethtown on December 13, 1788, and was the youngest daughter of Christopher Bush. The family was of Dutch descent and her father was a very industrious and influential citizen.

Most of the Bush family eventually left Kentucky, but Sarah Bush remained as she had married Daniel Johnston, a jailer of Hardin county. Daniel Johnston died about 1816, leaving her with three children. She continued to reside in Elizabethtown.

As Thomas Lincoln's wife, Nancy Hanks, had died in October, 1818, while living in Indiana, he decided to visit Elizabethtown again, and while there to call upon his former sweetheart. He was a very successful suitor and on December 2, 1819, he was married to the widow of Daniel Johnston by Rev. George L. Rogers, who was a minister in the Methodist Episcopal church.

Sarah Bush Johnston in 1818 purchased from Samuel Haycraft a small plot of land containing one and one-quarter acres, located just over the Haycraft line and just outside the city limits. The lot containing one and one-quarter acres is recorded in deed book G, page 213. The price paid for the tract was \$25.00.

This lot belonging to Sarah Bush Johnston had a small cabin built on it in which she lived. It was located in the rear of the lot on Main Street between Poplar and Cross Streets. This cabin of which there is a picture extant has often been confused with the unknown home of Thomas Lincoln and has often been erroneously attributed to be the home of Abraham Lincoln.

On December 2, 1819, when Thomas Lincoln and Sarah Bush Johnston were married, the wedding was held in a larger house that adjoined the property of Mrs. Johnston. This log house was built by Samuel Patton on Main Street and was directly in front of the small cabin. The larger house was better suited for the large crowd which was probably present at this ceremony. The house in the year 1819 belonged to Hon. Benjamin Chapeze, a distinguished lawyer, who most likely was

living there at that time. The Chapeze family resided in the Patton house until the 14th of April, 1828, when they sold the property to Thomas J. Walker.

The building in which the wedding was held was demolished in 1922 and a large brick garage building was erected upon the site. On February 12, 1927, the Elizabethtown Woman's Club appropriately marked the site by placing a bronze marker on the new building.

The fact that Thomas Lincoln returned to Elizabethtown from Indiana and married Sarah Bush Johnston gives Elizabethtown an additional Lincoln contact, which is of great interest to those studying the life of the famous emancipator.

*One block from City Hall  
1819-24*



Thursday, February 11, 1937



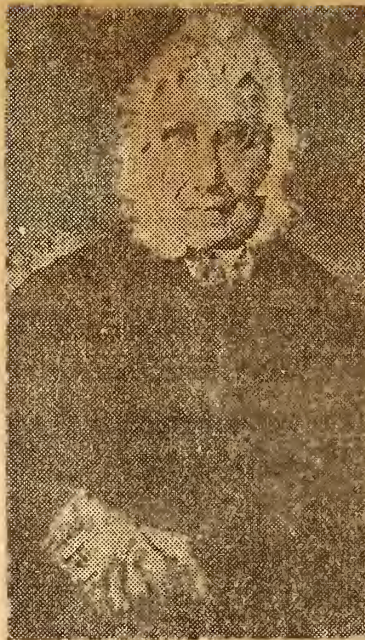
**A** LITTLE girl, reared in poverty in the backwoods of Virginia, destined for a brief and none too happy life, was to grow up and bear a child whose career more than fulfilled her highest dreams for him.

Born at Patterson's Creek, Va., in 1784, Nancy Hanks went at the age of twelve to live with her aunt and uncle, Thomas and Elizabeth Sparrow, in Mercer county, Virginia. She had a chance to attend school there, and made the most of it. In a community where many of the men could neither read nor write, she learned to do both, notes a writer in the Indianapolis News.

She was skilled at needlework, too, and hired out to families in the neighborhood. Though she worked for wages she was never regarded as a servant, but sat at table with the household wherever she went. Report says she was tall and handsome, with a frank, open countenance and a voice pleasing both when she sang and when she talked.

A young apprentice named Thomas Lincoln was learning the trade of carpentry in the shop of Joseph Hanks, uncle of Nancy. The two young people were attracted to each other, and were married on June 12, 1806. Thomas took his bride home to a tiny house fourteen feet square.

He could not write his own name until the ambitious Nancy taught him how. But his ambition could not keep pace with hers. Her dis-



Nancy Hanks, Mother of President Abraham Lincoln.

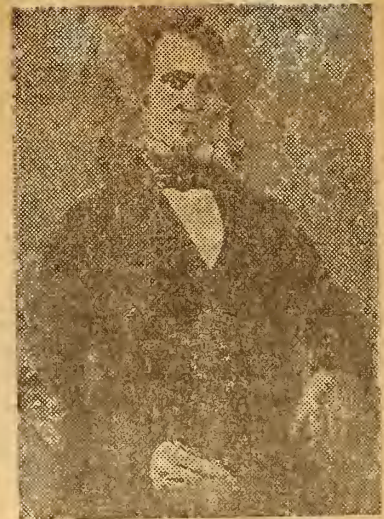
appointment at his easy-going ways was forgotten in her children; first, a little girl, Sarah; then, in 1809, the son known to history as Abraham Lincoln.

Between this child and this backwoods mother there was a powerful bond of sympathy. They understood each other without words. Perhaps she felt in him her own fierce hunger for learning, for a larger, richer world.

She was thirty-four years old, and Abraham Lincoln was nine, when she fell ill of an epidemic disease known in southern Indiana (to which the family had migrated) as the milk sickness. In seven days she was dead.

Abraham helped his father to make her coffin out of green lumber cut with a whipsaw, helped to bury her in a forest clearing. There was no ceremony. This troubled the boy until several months later, they secured a wandering preacher to deliver a funeral sermon over the lonely grave.

His mother's influence stayed with him always, and was voiced in that most famous of filial epigraphs: "All that I am or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."



This is the earliest known portrait of Abraham Lincoln. It is an old daguerrotype taken in 1846, when the martyred President was thirty-seven years old, a lawyer edging towards a political career.



# ILLINOIS RECALLS STEPMOTHER WHO AIDED LINCOLN

**Tuesday Will Mark Her  
150th Birthday.**

*Chicago Tribune 11-11-38*

The world little notes and seems not long to remember the woman who, next to the one who gave birth to Abraham Lincoln, probably had more influence in shaping his life than any other person.

This woman, who was born just 150 years ago next Tuesday, was Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln, friend of Nancy Hanks and stepmother of the boy who was to be President.

Nancy Hanks Lincoln, Abe's mother, died in 1818 when he was 9 years old. The house of Thomas Lincoln became a sad and dreary place without a guiding hand. Meals were poor, prepared by Abe's sister, Sarah, 11 years old. The few clothes went unattended, and a woman's touch was lacking from all things.

It was in November, 1819, that Sarah Bush entered the Lincoln home to be mother to Thomas' children and to Dennis Hanks, a cousin of Abe's, whose foster parents had died at the same time as Nancy Hanks. The new Mrs. Lincoln had three children of her own, Elizabeth, Matilda and John D. Johnston.

## **Thomas Lincoln's First Choice.**

Sarah Bush was born Dec. 13, 1788, in Kentucky, where Thomas Lincoln is said to have courted her before she became the bride of Daniel Johnston. Her husband died in October, 1818. A year and a month later Lincoln returned to Kentucky to seek her hand a second time.

N. J. Nall, a cousin of President Lincoln, has related details of this courtship:

"Uncle Thomas came back to Kentucky after the death of his first wife, Nancy Hanks, and proposed marriage to the widow Johnston; she told him that she would be perfectly willing to marry him, as she had known him a long time and felt that the marriage would be congenial and happy, but it would be impossible for her even to think of marrying, and leaving the state, as she was considerably in debt.

## **Abe's Father Well Fixed.**

"Uncle Thomas told her that need make no difference, as he had plenty of money and would take care of her financial affairs, and when he had ascertained the amount of her indebtedness and the names of the parties to whom the money was due, he went around and redeemed all her paper and presented it to her, and told her, when she showed so much honor about debts, he was more fully satisfied than ever that she would make him a good wife.

"She said, as he had displayed so much generosity in her behalf, she was willing then to marry and go with him to Spencer county, Indiana."

## **Made Log Cabin a Home.**

Sally Bush Lincoln changed the character of the Lincoln home completely when she entered it. She came well provided with household furniture, bringing many things unfamiliar to the Lincoln children.

"One fine bureau, one table, one set of chairs, one large clothes chest, cooking utensils, knives, forks, bedding and other articles."

She was a woman of thrift and gentleness, and at once made the cabin homelike and taught the children habits of cleanliness and comfort, according to contemporary accounts. Moreover, she was a woman of great natural dignity and kindness and she was highly esteemed by all who knew her.

She brought with her to her new home her three children, who, it is said, were well mannered children. They were immediately taken into the affections of the Lincoln children. Mrs. Lincoln never failed to treat all the children exactly alike without partiality of any kind.

## **Makes Life Worth Living.**

It was Sally Lincoln who insisted upon the improvement of their cabin; under her direction a floor, doors and windows were added.

Again it was Sally Lincoln who time and again refused to let Thomas send Abe to bed when late at night he studied on the floor before the fireplace, writing on a wooden shovel with charcoal. And, it was to her that Abe brought all of his troubles and his joys. She was always appreciative and advised the boy kindly, and always had time to stop her work and listen to him.

It was Sally Lincoln who comforted Abe when his only sister, Sarah, wife of Aaron Grigsby, died in 1826 in childbirth. Abe and Sarah were very devoted and the boy, then 17 years of age, grieved greatly over her death.

Through the early failures and disappointments of Lincoln's professional career, it was his stepmother to whom Abe turned for comfort and advice.

There is no question of the great and important influence Sarah Bush Lincoln had over the life and development of the sixteenth President of the United States, whom she survived.

She died at the old homestead in Coles county, Illinois, on Dec. 10, 1869—69 years ago yesterday.



# Outstanding Step-Mother, Who Reared Young Abraham Lincoln, Was Born 150 Years Ago Today

*Illinois State Register Dec 13-1938*

By WILLIAM DODD CHENERY

The immortal Gettysburg address of Abraham Lincoln contains the words "The world will little note nor long remember" what was said on that occasion. In that he was partly mistaken, for, though all other speeches of that memorable day have been forgotten, Lincoln's speech will ring down through the ages.

The quoted words above, however, apply to nearly all mortal events. How many citizens of Springfield, for instance, are aware that today, December 13, 1938, is the exact one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the birth of one of the four women who dominated the life of Lincoln, and whose beneficent influence shaped the career of the man whose God-given talents preserved the Union under which we so sincerely rejoice to live today.

In Kentucky, on December 13, 1788, was born Sarah Bush, who, won the admiration of Thomas Lincoln and whom he asked to be his wife. Already engaged to Daniel Johnston, it was only her friendship that she could give.

A few months afterward Thomas Lincoln wedded Nancy Hanks and the Johnston couple attended the three-day infare on that occasion, as also did students from the nearby college at Elizabethtown, among whom were Ninian Edwards, afterwards appointed by Gov. Patrick Henry as territorial governor of Illinois. Audubon, afterward the celebrated naturalist, and Thomas Walsh, a future senator from Texas.

Removing his family to Indiana, Thomas Lincoln lost his wife during a "milk sick" epidemic, and that same year, 1818, (with Illinois admitted that year to the Union) Daniel Johnston died also.

## Married Widow

Because of the desolate cabin and two small children, Thomas Lincoln visited Kentucky and persuaded the widow Johnston to become his wife. She said she would have to wait before marrying till her debts were paid, and Thomas Lincoln paid off the obligations. Sarah Lincoln brought many articles to the Indiana cabin that added comforts heretofore unknown to the Nancy Lincoln orphans.

Should women's clubs ever desire to honor the outstanding "step-mother" in all history let them erect a monument to Sarah Bush Lincoln. From the day she entered that little cabin the boy, Abraham, had a staunch friend, one who encouraged his every effort to acquire knowledge. The last visit made by Lincoln before departing for Washington, never to return alive, was to the home of his step-mother in Coles county.

Until the day Lincoln was twenty-one years of age he was constantly under the influence of, first, Nancy Lincoln, and then Sarah Lincoln.

heart were often told by her neighbors. Personally I recall Mrs. Charles Dallman, a friend of my own mother, telling that when her son, Charles, was born she was unable to nurse the baby because of ill health. Mrs. Lincoln also had a babe born the same week, and when she heard of the Dallman case she daily sent Mr. Lincoln for the baby, and herself nursed it till it was weaned.

Two years afterward that child died, and upon returning from the funeral Mrs. Dallman found upon her dining table an abundant supper, sent over by Mary Lincoln to save her the trouble of preparing one herself. Two descendants of that Mrs. Dallman live, Alice Dallman Cobb, and Vincent Y. Dallman, editor of The Illinois State Register.

## Mrs. Lincoln Anxious

My own grandmother related to me the anxiety and grief of Mrs. Lincoln on that morning of February 11, 1861, when Mr. Lincoln was cording their trunks in the office of the Chenery House, because of her fear that danger would come to her husband upon the perilous trip to Washington.

It is more than merely pitiful that a distorted history should have been used to depict Mrs. Lincoln in the cruel, unjust, exaggerated, libelous manner that is now in progress in the city of New York. The name of the man who published that history ought to be banished forever from the lips of all Americans who revere the memory of a beloved president, and abhor to see the name of his wife, who inspired his entire political career, dragged in the mire of filth unearthed by one whom Theodore Roosevelt would have termed a "Muck-Raker."

## Little Polly's Poem

### THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

Just 75 long years ago  
This 19th of November  
A. Lincoln set all hearts aglow  
With words we must remember!  
So on this autumn Saturday  
Let's put all other thoughts away  
And dwell on what he had to say  
In that renowned oration—  
For what Our Hero told us then  
Is still important to the men  
And women of this nation.

I'd like to put within your reach  
The many truths he tried to teach  
Which make this celebrated speech  
As fresh as when he made it—  
I had a copy of it here  
But it has seemed to disappear  
Or maybe I mislaid it.

## ANYWAY

Just 75 long years ago  
This 19th of November  
A. Lincoln set all hearts aglow  
With words we must remember!

## LITTLE POLLY

Punctuation by T. D.

## Ann Rutledge Third

The third woman in his life was Ann Rutledge of New Salem. Rooming in her father's tavern the youth, Abraham, could not have failed to realize the admirable qualities of Ann Rutledge, the first attractive, prepossessing and fairly well educated young woman with whom he had come in close contact.

Ann had persuaded him to attend a class in Jacksonville the autumn she was to return to that town for further schooling herself, and only her death changed that plan. That he sincerely mourned her death is undoubted, but there has never been proof that Lincoln's heart was "buried in her grave" and that, therefore, he never loved the woman he wedded, Mary Todd.

The ardent love affair of Ann and Abraham was said by early inhabitants of New Salem to have been a myth of an historian whose aim seemed to have been to distort popular estimation of Mary Todd Lincoln, and that fairy tale gave plausibility to comments unfavorable to Mrs. Lincoln.

## Raised Family

Absent oft-times many months each year on circuit law riding trips, the responsibility of raising the family of small children devolved upon Mary Todd Lincoln. Those who knew her son, Robert Todd Lincoln, know how magnificently she fulfilled her mission.

Instances of her kindness of



# Stepmother<sup>271</sup> Big Factor in Lincoln's Life

By Dr. Garry C. Myers

Abraham Lincoln was born in a log cabin in Kentucky on Sunday morning, Feb. 12, 1809, ten years after George Washington was buried. This cabin had only one room, one small window of greased paper, and the ground was its floor.

Abe's father was Thomas Lincoln who could not read and could merely scribble his name. His mother, Nancy Hanks, could barely read and no one ever found a copy of her signature.

Abe had a sister, Sarah, about two years older. They had a baby brother who lived for only three days. Dennis Hanks, Abe's uncle who was about Abe's age, lived with them.

Abe's mother died when he was 9. A year and a half later he got a stepmother, 31, who consented to marry his father only after he assured her he would pay the debts she owed.

## *A Good Stepmother*

The new mother brought cheer and sunshine to the orphaned children. Though she could read very little herself she brought books with her which Abe read. She also brought along three playmates for Abe and Sally about their age—two daughters and a son. Abe's father did not have much use for "eddicat'n," but the stepmother did her best to encourage Abe in his wish to learn. Years later she told a friend:

"I induced my husband to encourage Abe to read and study at home, as well as at school . . . Abe was a dutiful son to me always and we took particular care when he was reading not to disturb him and would let him read on and on until he quit on his own accord." She also said that Abe would often copy things he read that he liked very much and would bring them to ask her opinion of them. She also said, "Abe ciphered on boards when he had no paper or no slate and when the boards would get too black he would shave them off with a drawing knife and go on again . . ."

She had a sense of humor, and could laugh and have fun with the children.

Later she said of Abe:

"I can say what scarcely one mother in a thousand can say, Abe never gave me a cross word or look, and never refused in fact or appearance to do anything I asked."

Lincoln, after he became a man, told a friend of "the encouragement he had always received from his stepmother . . . She had been his best friend in this world and that no son could love a mother more than he loved her."

# STEPMOTHER HEWED LINCOLN CHARACTER

By JOSEPHINE A. O. TAYLOR.

THE 151st birthday of a woman, on Dec. 13, which probably has never been celebrated, and about whom little is ever said but who next to the one who gave him birth and nine years of childhood, probably had more influence in shaping the life of Abraham Lincoln than anyone else. This woman was his stepmother, Sara Bush Johnston Lincoln.

Nancy Hanks Lincoln, Abe's mother died in 1818, when he was 9 years old. After the death of the mother, the home of the Lincolns was a sad and dreary place without the guiding hand. Meals were dull, prepared by his sister, Sarah, only a child of 11, the few clothes went unattended, and a woman's touch was lacking from all things.

It was in November of 1819, just 120 years ago, that she came to the Lincoln home to be a mother to Thomas Lincoln's children, and also Dennis Hanks, a cousin of Abe's, whose foster parents had died at the same time of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, as well as her own three children, Elizabeth, Matilda and John D. Johnston.

## Incident of Courtship.

Sarah Bush was born in Kentucky, Dec. 13, 1788. She was a friend of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, and it is said that Thomas Lincoln had been her suitor before she married Daniel Johnston. Her husband died in October, 1818. In November, 1819, Thomas Lincoln went to Kentucky to seek her a second time in marriage. An incident of the courtship is told by J. L. Nall, a cousin of President Lincoln:

"Uncle Thomas came back to Kentucky after the death of his first wife, Nancy Hanks, and proposed marriage to the widow Johnston. She told him that she would be perfectly willing to marry him, as she had known him a long time, and felt that the marriage would be congenial and happy; but it would be impossible for her even to think of marrying, and leaving the state, as she was considerably in debt. Uncle Thomas told her that need make no difference, as he had plenty of money, and would take care of her financial affairs; and when he had ascertained the amount of her indebtedness and the names of the parties to whom the money was due, he went around and redeemed all her paper and presented it to her, and told her when she showed so much honor about debts, he was more fully satisfied than ever that she would make him a good wife. She said, as he had displayed so much generosity in her behalf, she was willing then to marry and go with him to Spencer county, Indiana."

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Abraham wrote in his father's family Bible his stepmother's birth—"Sarah Bush—first married to Daniel Johnston and afterwards second wife of Thomas Lincoln, was born Dec. 13th, 1788."

## Comforted During Sorrow.

It was Sarah Lincoln who comforted Abe when his only sister, Sarah, wife of Aaron Grigsby, died in 1826, in childbirth. Abe and Sarah were very devoted and the boy then 17 years of age, grieved greatly over her death.

Throughout his early failures and disappointments, it was his stepmother to whom Abe turned for comfort and advice.

There is no question of the great and important influence Sarah Bush Lincoln had over the life

and development of her stepson, Abraham Lincoln, who was destined to become 16th President of the United States.

She died December 10, 1869, at the old homestead in Coles county, Illinois.

## Reconstructed Home.

Sarah Bush Lincoln changed the character of the Lincoln home completely when she entered it.

She came well provided with household furniture, bringing with her many things unfamiliar to the Lincoln children. "One fine bureau, one table, one set of chairs, one large clothes chest, cooking utensils, knives, forks, bedding and other articles." She was a woman of thrift and gentleness and at once made the cabin homelike and taught the children habits of cleanliness and comfort. She was a woman of great natural dignity and kindness and highly esteemed by all who knew her.

She brought with her to her new home her three children, whom, it is said, were well-mannered children and were immediately taken into the affections of the Lincoln children. Mrs. Lincoln never failed to treat all the children exactly alike, without partiality of any kind.

## Guided Lincoln Home.

It was Sarah Lincoln who insisted upon the improvement of their cabin; under her direction, a floor, doors and windows were added.

It was also Sarah Lincoln, who time and again refused to let Thomas send Abe to bed when, late

[to col. 2]



## Sarah Bush Lincoln's 152d Anniversary Nears

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There is no question of the great and important influence Sarah Bush Lincoln had over the life and development of her step-son, Abraham Lincoln, who became sixteenth President of the United States.

She died December 10, 1869, at the old homestead in Coles county, Illinois.

## Lincoln's Stepmother

BY GARRY C. MYERS, PH. D.

IT IS not easy to be a good stepmother. You and I have seen some who are really wonderful and we admire them. Abe Lincoln's stepmother was one.

At the age of 8 Abe Lincoln's mother died. His father, Tom Lincoln, about two years later, leaving Abe and his sister Sarah alone for several weeks, walked over 100 miles back to Kentucky where he had grown up, and married Sarah Bush Johnson, whose husband had died a few years before, leaving her with three children. No one knows how much these children contributed toward the personality and education of Abe Lincoln—undoubtedly a great deal.

Tom Lincoln did not walk back home. Four horses drew them along with considerable furniture. "Here's your mammy," said Tom Lincoln to Abe and Sarah. The new Mrs. Lincoln took the corn husks Abe had been sleeping on, piled them in the yard and said they would be good for a pigpen later; and Abe was given a feather pillow and feather mattress.

WHEN Tom Lincoln proposed to the widow he got quickly to the point. "I have no wife and you no husband. I came a-purpose to marry you. I knowed you from a gal and you knowed me from a boy. I have no time to lose and if you are willin', let it be done."

She replied, "I got debts." He asked her for a list of these debts, paid them, then bought a license.

At about the age of 14, Abe borrowed a book from Josiah Crawford. The book was badly soiled one night by the rain that beat in through the cracks of the cabin. Abe went to the owner and volunteered to work in order to pay for the book.

When he was 20, Lincoln kept a store, and he discovered one evening that a woman had paid him 6 cents too much. That night he walked six miles to pay back the 6 cents to the woman, earning the title, "Honest Abe." No university degree could equal that in value. Let parents lead children to want to be honest when they don't have to be.

OF THE sense of humor of Lincoln's second mother, Carl Sandburg writes: "His stepmother told him she didn't mind his bringing dirt into the house on his feet; she could scour the floor; but she asked him to keep his head washed or he'd be rubbing the dirt on her whitewashed rafters. He put barefoot boys to wading in a nud puddle near the horse trough, picked them up one by one, carried them to the house upside

down and walked their muddy feet across the ceiling. The mother came in, laughed an hour at the foot tracks, told Abe he ought to be spanked—and he cleaned the ceiling so it looked new."

Have you ever seen more commendable behavior in any parent?

She understood the adolescent boy as few parents do. "If he broke out laughing when others saw nothing to laugh at, she let it pass as a sign of his thoughts working their own way. So far as she was concerned he had a right to do unaccountable things."

She understood and so did he. Of Abe she said in later years: "He never spoke to me a cross word in his life since we lived together."

*Living City*  
*Journal*  
*3-12-41*



# Lincoln's Stepmother Contributed Much to Forming of His Character

*Denver Post 2-12-41*

(By GARRY CLEVELAND MYERS, PH.D.)

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## WHEN TOM LINCOLN PROPOSED.

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## MOTHER HAD SENSE OF HUMOR.

Of the sense of humor of Lincoln's second mother, Carl Sandburg writes: "His stepmother told him she didn't mind his bringing dirt into the house on his feet; she could scour the floor; but she asked him to keep his head washed or he'd be rubbing the dirt on her white-washed rafters."

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IT IS sober truth to say that Abraham Lincoln struck the noblest, highest, holiest note in the inmost native soul of the American people.

In the new paganism of commerce; of money getting, no matter how; of criticism of public men who, whatever their faults, are to be loved because they have been hated by those who seek to make the nation sinister and corrupt, there is nothing so sodden and sordid but will in some sense uncover and kneel at the sound of the name of Abraham Lincoln.

The average American does not shout when he hears the name of Abraham Lincoln. Even the political demagogue, the stock gambler, the captain of industry, is likely to grow silent and reverential when the name of Lincoln is spoken.

And while we are getting ready to honor Lincoln it is well to add that none may understand his people who has not first discovered what it is in his character and in ours that makes us love him above comparison in the story of the world's great men—love him for his poverty, his simplicity, for his humanity, for his fidelity, for his justice, for his plainness, for his life and for his death.

Sheer force of character must have been the inherent trait which he had well cultivated.

His attitude to women may have been but an incident, but there can be no question but that the influence of various women with whom it was his good fortune to be associated in his earlier days had not a little to do with the forming of one of his most predominant traits. He was, in his later life, one of the kind of men of whom good women declare, in all humility and honesty for their sex, that through the fineness of his perception and his gentility toward everyone and everything, that he "might have been a woman." It is a high compliment.

In the first place, he was born of a good woman. Nancy Hanks, his mother, neglected in the neglect of those of her social status at the time she was born, must have in the sublimity of maternity engendered in the life-blood of her illustrious offspring the nourishment that made the great achievements of Abraham Lincoln possible. Yet, to her is due but the honor of instilling, with her own blood, her own spirit, the character that enabled Abraham Lincoln to become the first American—the conglomerate of all that is meant in the phrase, "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Nancy Hanks gave Lincoln birth. She was the daughter of supposedly illiterate and superstitious people, but she was comely, intelligent, knew how to read and write and taught her husband, Thomas Lincoln, father of the president, to scrawl his name.

The great Lincoln always believed that he got his intelligence and powers from his mother.

The family moved from Kentucky to Indiana when Lincoln was seven years old. Two years later Nancy Hanks Lincoln succumbed to a pestilence known as milk sickness. She died in October. Her husband sawed a coffin out of the forest trees and buried her in a little clearing. Several months later a wandering frontier clergyman preached a sermon over her lonely grave. No wonder the countenance of the great emancipator moved all who beheld it by its deep melancholy. He

knew what sorrow was 45 years before he paced his office in the White House all night, with white face and bowed head, sorrowing over the defeat of Chancellorsville, wondering whether he was to be the last president of the United States and praying for the victory that came at Gettysburg.

All that year the sensitive boy grieved for the mother who had gone out of his life; but time the father went back to Kentucky.

In Elizabethtown, near the big South Fork Nolin creek, in Hardin county, where Lincoln was born, he married the widow of the town jailer. Presently thereafter a four-horse wagon creaked up to the door of the Lincoln cabin in the Indiana forest and young "Abe" made his first acquaintance with Sarah Bush Lincoln, who, next to his own mother, was to become the second incentive of his youthful life.

Sarah Bush Lincoln was a woman of thrift and energy, tall, straight, fair and a kind-hearted, motherly Christian. The American people owe a debt to this noble matron, who did so much to influence and develop the character of the boy who was yet to save the

nation from destruction.

She was good to the Lincoln orphans, whose mother lay out in the wild forest grave. She

gave them warm clothing. She threw away the mat of corn husks and leaves on which they slept and replaced it with a soft feather tick. She loved little "Abe" and the lonely boy returned her kindness

and affection. In a primitive cabin, set in the midst of a savage country, she created that noblest and best result of a good woman's heart, a happy home.

The young Lincoln grew rapidly. Always an invidious reader, he ever found time for reading. In this pursuit he appears to have been tireless, but it seems not to have caused him to isolate himself from the social life of his primitive neighborhood. By 17 he was six feet four inches tall. His legs and arms were long, his hands and feet big and his skin dry and yellow. His gaunt face and melancholy gray eyes were set in cavernous sockets above his prominent cheek bones. He was not, therefore, a "ladies' man," but at the same time the mysterious something that made him beloved above the average of prominent Americans stood him in stead. He was always popular with his fellows, even as a spraddling hoy.

A girl schoolmate has described him as he appeared at this early time:



# LINCOLN'S BOYHOOD

## the WOMEN WHO

## MOLDED HIM

"His shoes, when he had any, were low. He wore buckskin breeches, linsey-woolsey shirt and a cap made of the skin of a squirrel or coon. His breeches were baggy and lacked by several inches meeting the tops of his shoes, thereby exposing his shin bone, sharp, blue and narrow."

But this girl cared for him, even as, much later in life, she was proud to have known him.

Trivial as it may seem, the verse penned by him when he was 17, at the time of his sister Sarah's marriage to Aaron Grigsby, may give some insight into his lifelong estimate of the attitude of man toward woman. These are the concluding verses:

The woman was not taken  
From Adam's feet we see;  
So he must not abuse her,  
The meaning seems to be.

The woman was not taken  
From Adam's head we know,  
To show she should not rule him—  
'Tis evidently so.

The woman she was taken  
From under Adam's arm,  
So she must be protected  
From injuries and harm.

It was after he had passed through many of his earlier vicissitudes that Lincoln encountered his first great romance. The family had moved from Indiana to Illinois. When they migrated from New Salem, Sangamon county, Abraham, who has assisted his father, step-mother and the rest of the family to passable affluence remained behind. He split rails, he traveled down the Mississippi on a house boat and had his first elucidation of slavery in its most hideous forms and of the uncertainty and irresponsibility of the negro race.

He returned to New Salem and became a clerk. In drawing crowds of villagers he proved a popular acquisition. The job "pecked out" and he was elected a captain in the Black Hawk war. His was a bloodless campaign, but he came out of it with honors and increased popularity. All the time he had been

reading every book he could find. Later he engaged in storekeeping with a partner, but he was not cast for a mercantile career.

When he first was elected to the Illinois state legislature in 1834 he met and fell in love with pretty, auburn-haired Anne Rutledge, daughter of the owner of the tavern in which he lived. His passion seemed hopeless, for the maid of 17 was pledged to a young man from New York. Yet Lin-

coln loved and waited and hoped, even when his suit appeared entirely hopeless.

Finally the lover went away, promising to come back. Lincoln remained a stanch, true friend. After a while it became apparent that the New Yorker had deserted his fiancée. Then Lincoln

offered the girl his heart and it eventually was accepted. But Lincoln's happiness was short-lived. Anne Rutledge sickened and died. Lincoln was inconsolable.

Following this bereavement he plunged into politics and statecraft and built the foundation for his later life. During this period he met Mary S. Owens. He wrote love letters to her, but later on frankly told her that, while he was willing to keep his engagement with her, it were better for her own sake that she should not hold him. She accepted his honest explanation and his second romance withered and died.

Still another woman who was instrumental in framing Lincoln's strong and impressive character was Lucy Gilmer Speed. Her husband owned the tavern at Springfield, whither Lincoln rode when the capital was changed from New Salem. Lincoln became

their guest and throughout his remaining life numbered them as his stanchest friends. He often descanted on the sound counsel and sisterly care bestowed upon him by Mrs. Speed.

Although he became at this time one of the foremost statesmen of Illinois, his previous experience caused him to doubt his own heart. He became engaged to Mary Todd. After a brief period, doubting his love, he broke the engagement. It even has been charged that he deserted her when she was attired for the wedding. To his bosom friends, Joshua F. and Lucy Speed, Lincoln described the parting:

"When I told Mary I did not love her," he said, "she burst into tears, and, almost springing from her chair and wringing her hands, as if in agony, said something about the deceiver being himself deceived. To tell you the truth, it was too much for me. I found the tears trickling down my own cheeks. I caught her in my arms and kissed her."

So great was Lincoln's remorse that he was watched by his friends lest he commit suicide. Here again came in the sound influence of Mrs. Speed. She and her husband

made Lincoln one of their own family. She was a saintly woman and through her he learned, even more than by his reading, the story and the precepts of the Man of Nazareth that in later years enriched his vocabulary and did so much to guide his conduct.

In two years Mary Todd became his wife. It was a singular jest of fate that he should have won her away from Stephen A. Douglas, who was later to be his rival in the great anti-slavery struggle that was ended only by millions of armed men and that almost simultaneous with its ending left Mary Todd a widow.

Of the union were born the sons Robert T., "Willie" and "Tad." "Willie" died in the White House February 20, 1862, and "Tad," or Thomas, died in Chicago, July 15, 1871, at



the age of 18 years. Robert T., the eldest of the three sons, lives in Chicago. He is president of the Pullman company and has enjoyed a highly successful business career.

Of Lincoln's attitude toward the estimable woman who became his wife perhaps as good an estimate as any may be found in practically his last words to her, spoken on the afternoon of the day of his assassination, as they rode through the streets of Washington.

He talked to her of what they would do when his term of office was over and they could take up a quiet life again.

"We have saved some money," he said, "and ought to be able to save some more. And with that and what I can earn from my law practice we can settle down in Springfield or Chicago and live cozily to a green old age."

But God had otherwise disposed. Within 24 hours the woman who, in the ultimate, had shared the tribulations and the adulations of the great emancipator was widowed and his sons and the entire nation were orphaned.

## Stepmother of Abe Illiterate

Dear Sir:—Regarding the land which the State is taking for the Lincoln Memorial Park, the land actually was owned by Abraham Lincoln. It was conveyed to him by his father, Thomas Lincoln, with a reservation of a life estate, in his father and mother. Just why such a deed was made, is problematical. Deeds are frequently made this way, by a father to a son, but not often the other way.

From letters, passing between Thomas Lincoln and Abraham, one might be led to believe that it was done so that Thomas Lincoln could hold it free from debts, and have a home. It appears the son actually paid for it, paid some debts I believe, and having paid for it, he had a perfect right to fix it so his parents would have a home there, and a certainty of a home, as if the son had died without this, the father might have objected.

The deed is recorded in Record G on page 5 of the Coles County Deed Records. Sarah Bush Lincoln signed by mark. As your father remarked some quarter of a century ago, it is clear that the step mother did not teach Abraham Lincoln to write. There are other conveyances signed by Sarah Bush Lincoln, executed by mark.

This signifies very little as a large per cent of the early settlers could not write. There have been many kings who could not write, hence the use of the signet.

As for the trial, it was a remarkably interesting case.

The law allows the owner full cash market value for any purpose. With the historical associations attached, this land might sell for \$10,000.00. But as no one has had any experience, in the sale of historical sites, evidence could not be obtained. If evidence had been offered, as to other historical sites, Roosevelt, Jefferson, and so forth, the court would have held the evidence too remote, in time and place. The court excluded the only witness the owner tendered, because he had no such experience.

The jury did the best they could and we are satisfied.

A. C. ANDERSON,  
In the Charleston Daily News.



## "ABE WAS A 'MOTHER'S BOY'"



It required a woman of more than ordinary tact to bring up children born to three different pairs of parents to live together in unity. But Dennis Hanks testifies to the fact that the Lincolns' second mother did that with rare success. She had three children of her own, named Sarah, Matilda and John Johnson. Because of another Sarah in the family, Sarah Lincoln's name was changed to Nancy, for her dead mother. Then, besides Abraham, there was the Lincolns' cousin Dennis, making six children for that mother-hearted stepmother to reconcile and rear to man's and woman's estate.

Sarah Bush Lincoln was not long in discovering that "Abe was no common boy." Abraham, on his part, received his new mother with respect and appreciation. A bond of sympathy soon brought them closer to each other. Thomas Lincoln couldn't see any sense in Abe's reading all the time. He thought that was only an aggravated form of laziness. Besides, he had no use for "edication." It took all his second wife's diplomacy and tact to keep him from preventing the boy from reading and study altogether. Mrs. Lincoln even induced the father to let Abe go to school now and then. For these intercessions Abraham Lincoln never ceased to be grateful to her. He always spoke of her as his mother, and most of the fervent praise he bestowed on his mother's memory was meant for his good stepmother.

Dennis Hanks, in after years, described Abraham's life in the home, and his devotion to both mothers. (It should be borne in mind that Nancy Hanks, Abraham's own mother, was Dennis's cousin.) Here is what Dennis told:

"We had plenty to eat—such as it was—corn dodgers, bacon and game, some fish and wild fruits. We had very little wheat flour. For clothing we had jeans. Abe was grown before he wore all-wool pants. It was a new country, and he was a raw boy; rather a bright and likely lad; but the big world seemed far ahead of him. We were all slow-goin' folks. But he had the stuff of greatness in him. He got his rare sense and sterling principles from both parents. But his kindness, humor, love of humanity, hatred of slavery, all came from his mother. I am free to say Abe was a 'mother's boy.'"



Sarah Bush Lincoln

"A woman of more than ordinary tact"





## ABE LINCOLNS FAMILY

### ANECDOTES OF NANCY HANKS AND SARAH BUSH.

#### The Great Presidents Mother and Step-mother—The Doubts Concerning His Parentage—Ability Inherited From an Unknown Grandfather.

Written for The Republic.

The best account of President Lincoln's family connection is that given by his law partner, W. H. Herndon, whose biography is not only the best of the lives of Lincoln, but one of the best ever written. Yet even Herndon leaves a great deal of history still unwritten in this connection.

He has conferred an obligation on posterity, however, by handling boldly and impartially, as far as he was able to get at the facts, the story of Lincoln's illegitimacy. It has so often been asserted in Kentucky that Lincoln was descended from

the Marshall family or from other prominent people in Kentucky that Mr. Herndon and his associate, Mr. Welk, took some pains to get at all obtainable facts.

"Regarding the paternity of Lincoln," Mr. Herndon says, "a great many surmises and a still larger amount of unwritten or at least unpublished history have drifted into the currents of Western lore and journalism. A number of such traditions are extant in Kentucky and other localities. Mr. Welk has spent considerable time in investigating a report current in Bourbon County, Kentucky, that Thomas Lincoln, for a consideration from one Abraham Inlow, a miller, assumed the paternity of the illegitimate child of a poor girl named Nancy Hanks, and after marriage removed with her to Washington or Hardin County, where the son, who was named Abraham after his real and Lincoln after his putative father was born. A prominent citizen in the town of Mount Sterling in that State, who was at one time Judge of the court and subsequently editor of a newspaper, and who descended from the Abraham Inlow mentioned, has written a long argument in support of his alleged kinship through this source to Mr. Lincoln. He emphasizes the striking resemblances in stature, facial features and length of arms, notwithstanding the well-established fact that the first born child of the real Nancy Hanks was not a boy, but a girl, and that the marriage did not take place in Bourbon, but in Washington County."

Mr. Herndon dismisses the other stories as unsupported by tangible evidence, and he turns from the subject after saying in justification of his attempt to get at the truth of it that "while many of our great men have been self-made, rising gradually through struggles to the topmost round of the ladder, Lincoln rose from a lower depth than any of them—from a stagnant, putrid pool, like the gas which, set on fire by its own energy, rises in jets, blazing clear and bright."

Thomas Lincoln married first Nancy Hanks, mother of Abraham, and after her death in Indiana he returned to Kentucky and married Sarah Bush Johnston, widow of Daniel Johnston, jailer of Hardin County. It is said that Lincoln had courted her before he married Nancy Hanks, but had been rejected. She was several grades higher in the social scale than the Lincolns or the Hankses, but when in her widowhood her former suitor returned from Indiana for the express purpose of marrying her she yielded without keeping him long in suspense.

"He made a very short courtship," says Samuel Haycraft, Clerk of the County Court. "He went to see her on the first day of December, 1819, and in a straightforward manner told her they had known each other from childhood. 'Miss Johnston,' said he, 'I have no wife and you no

husband. I came a-purpose to marry you. I knowed you from a gal and you knowed me from a boy. I have no time to lose, and if you are willin', let it be done straight off."

It was done "straight off," for Mr. Haycraft issued the license and they were married the next morning.

To this stepmother and to his own mother, Nancy Hanks, Lincoln was tenderly attached, but though he was dutiful and helpful to Thomas Lincoln, it seems clear that he did not feel a son's affection towards him. This does not necessarily implicate him, as might be insinuated, that he doubted if Thomas Lincoln were really his father. It is easily accounted for by such facts as this related by Nancy Hanks' brother Dennis:

"Abe was a good boy," writes this observant uncle; "an affectionate boy, a boy who loved his parents well and was obedient to their every wish. Although everything but an impudent or a rude boy, he was sometimes uncomfortably inquisitive. When strangers would ride along or pass by his father's fence he always, either through boyish pride or to tease his father, would be sure to ask the first question. His father would sometimes knock him over. When thus punished he never bellowed, but dropped a kind of silent, unwelcome tear as evidence of his sensitiveness or other feelings."

Such facts as this, added to the other fact that Thomas Lincoln was hopelessly a good-for-nothing, explains his son's coldness toward him. Though it is altogether possible that in his later life Mr. Lincoln may have doubted their relationship, no such doubt would have influenced a man of his kindness of heart to such coldness as is shown in the letter in which he responded to the notification that his father was very near death. "Say to him," he wrote in 1851, "that if we could meet now, it is doubtful if it would not be more painful than pleasant; but that, if it be his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyous meeting with

the many loved ones gone before, and where the rest of us hope ere long, through the help of God, to join them."

Lincoln's extraordinary qualities do not need to be accounted for by any merely physical heredity, for, although such heredity transmits tendencies, it is a higher and more potent truth that intellect only can beget intellect; that mind is transmitted only from intercourse with mind; but Mr. Lincoln was himself a believer in the common theory of heredity, and he accounted for his possession of traits different from those shown by other members of his family not on the ground that he himself was illegitimate, but that his mother was.

"On the subject of his ancestry and origin," writes Mr. Herndon, "I only remember one time when Mr. Lincoln ever referred to it. It was about 1850, when he and I were driving in his one-horse buggy to court in Menard County, Illinois. The suit we were going to try was one in which we were likely to touch either directly or collaterally on the subject of hereditary traits. During the ride he spoke of his mother for the first time in my hearing, dwelling on her characteristics and mentioning or enumerating what qualities he

inherited from her. He said among other things that she was the illegitimate daughter of Lucy Hanks and a well-bred Virginia farmer or planter; and he argued that from this last source came his power of analysis, his logic, his mental activity, his ambition and all the qualities that distinguished him from other members of the Hanks family. He believed that his better and finer traits came from this broad-minded, unknown Virginian. The revelation, painful as it was, called up the memory of his mother, and as the buggy jolted over the road he added ruefully, 'God bless my mother! All that I am or ever hope to be I owe to her.'"

It is not to be doubted that Lincoln was right in his estimate of his mother. She was much superior to her ignorant, dull and shiftless husband. Thomas Lincoln was not a wicked man, but he was thoroughly self-indulgent. He was not a hopeless drunkard, but he got drunk when he felt in the humor. He worked, but only when he could not avoid it. He was not a brute, but he had no other light to guide him than the common sense of the lowest and most ignorant class, and but for Nancy Hanks and Sarah Bush, Abra-

ham Lincoln would neither have been allowed to learn to read nor to have a book in the Indiana cabin in which he grew up.

Nancy Hanks could read, and her son said of her that "she was highly intellectual by nature, had a strong memory, acute judgment, and was cool and heroic." When she married Thomas Lincoln, the carpenter, he could neither read nor write, but she taught him to write his name and to read well enough to spell his way through the Bible. Such religion as he had, probably exercised a restraining influence on him, but it did not compel his improvement, though at one time or another he was a Free-Will Baptist, a Presbyterian and a Christian (Campbellite). The type he represented was not irreligious. On the contrary, men of his class were often warmly interested in religion, but too frequently it was rather as theologians than practitioners. They looked on religion rather as a matter of doctrine than as a rule of life, and they were much more concerned to get themselves, and more especially their neighbors, right in doctrine than to improve their manner of living.

In his autobiography Cartwright, the celebrated evangelist and circuit rider, describes such a family as were the Lincolns when their poverty and the shiftlessness of her husband were grinding out the life of poor Nancy Hanks in their cabin in Indiana.

Cartwright found this family living in Southern Illinois, in a log cabin, with a dirt floor. They had no furniture except such as the father had made with his ax, but they were devout, and Cartwright thought well of the father until he found that he was keeping his family in squalor in the hope that by doing so he would finally become a landholder. Cartwright became highly indignant, and gave him such a scolding that the squatter grew very angry. But when the circuit rider next passed the cabin a bedstead and other furniture had been bought, and some attempt made at decency.

Thomas Lincoln never made such an attempt while his first wife lived. The Lincoln cabin in Indiana, says Herndon, "was high enough to admit a loft in which Abe slept, and to which he ascended each night by means of pegs driven in the wall. The rude furniture was in keeping with the surroundings. Three-legged stools answered for chairs. The bedstead, made of poles fastened in the cracks of the logs on one side and supported by a crocheted stick driven in the dirt floor on the other, was covered with skins, leaves and old clothes. A table of the same finish as the stools,

a few pewter dishes, a Dutch oven and a skillet completed the household outfit."

Here Nancy Hanks lived until 1818, educating her children as best she could, teaching them to be kind to each other, to hate whisky and to worship God. Her own religion was rude and emotional, but it meant more to her than it did to her husband, for it helped her in her life, while his seems to have been of no service to him except as an intellectual recreation.

J. B. Helms, in his manuscript account of a camp meeting at Elizabethtown, Ky., describes the conversion of a couple whom Mr. Herndon thinks were Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks.

"The Hanks girls were great at camp meetings," writes Mr. Helm. "I remember one in 1806. I will give you a scene, and if you will then read the books written on the subject you may find some apology for the superstition that was said to be in Abe Lincoln's character. It was a camp meeting, as before said, when a general shout was about to commence. Preparations were being made and a young lady invited me to stand on a bench by her side, where we could see all over the altar. To the right a strong, athletic looking young man was being put in trim for the occasion, which was done by divesting him of all apparel except shirt and pants. On the left a young lady was being put in trim much in the same manner, so that her clothes would not be in the way, and so that when her combs blew out her hair would go into graceful braids.

She, too, was young—not more than 20, perhaps. The performance was begun at about the same time by the young man on the right and the young lady on the left. Slowly and gracefully they worked their way towards the center, shouting, hugging and kissing, generally their own sex, until at last nearer and nearer they came. The center of the altar was reached and the two closed with their arms around each



other, the man singing and shouting at the top of his voice. Just at this moment the young lady holding to my arm whispered, 'They are to be married next week. Her name is Hanks.'

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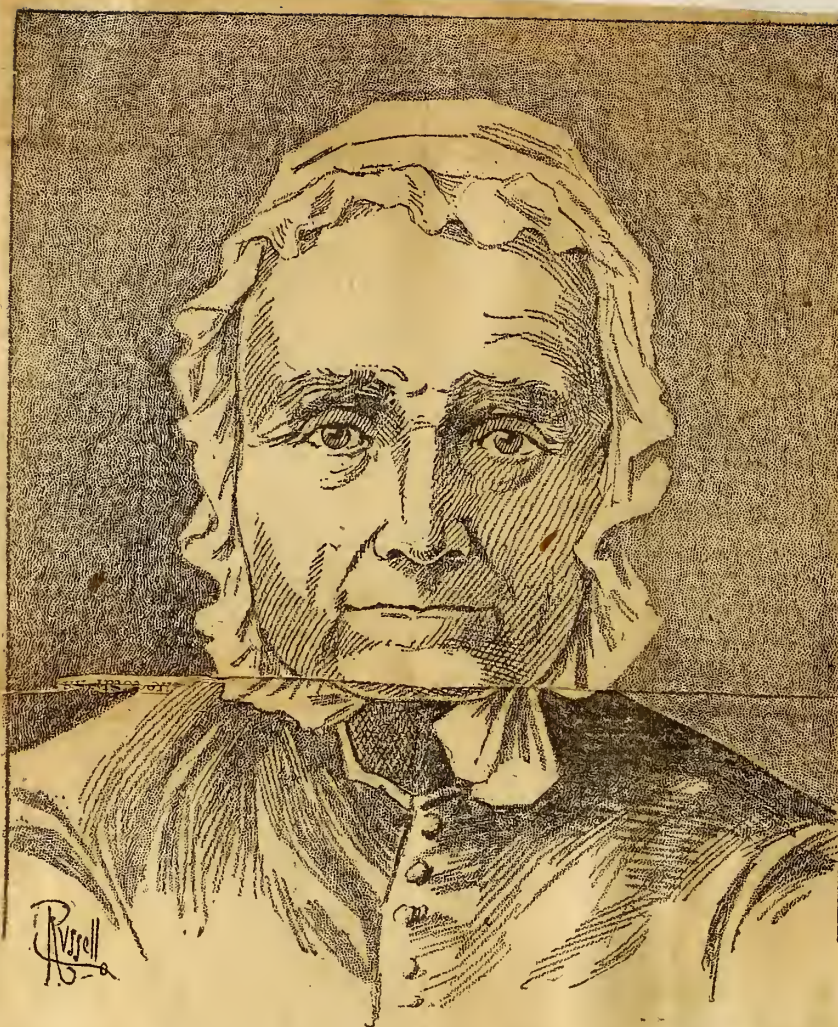
Lincoln was only 9 years old when his mother died, but his stepmother worked a marked improvement in the condition of the family and probably gave an impetus to his development as great as that he received from his own mother. It is certain at any rate that she interfered to prevent his father from taking away his books and through her he was allowed to "waste his time" reading such books as Pilgrim's Progress and Aesop's Fables, which, with the Bible, the poems of Robert Burns and a life of Washington, constituted the library to which he had access as a boy.

Sarah Bush Lincoln lived until 1869, dying in that year on a farm purchased for her by her stepson, eight miles south of Charleston, Ill. Lincoln's last visit to her was in 1861, and in describing it she burst into tears. "I did not want Abe to run for President," she said, "and I did not want to see him elected. I was afraid something would happen to him, and when he came down to see me after he was elected President I still felt and my heart told me that something would befall Abe and I would never see him again."

\* \* \* \*

Since the Bible and Aesop's Fables were among the first books Lincoln ever read, all that is needed to account for him is to account for his reading them. If that was due to his mother and his stepmother, there is no need to attempt to trace his ancestry to people of highly developed intellect, as he himself did in referring to the unknown father of his mother.

Given an ordinary intellect—that is, an intellect capable of receiving and holding impressions—in contact with intellects of such transcendent greatness as those of the author of the Book of Job, the Prophecies of Isaiah, and, in another way, of Aesop's Fables, and what needs to be accounted for is not that higher intellect should be developed, but that it should fall of development. There is mind enough in those three books to furnish intellect to generations of statesmen greater than the world has yet seen, and it is by such great minds that the intellects of all great men are begotten rather than from the flesh of such clods as Thomas Lincoln.



SARAH BUSH LINCOLN.

(After photograph in Mr. Herndon's possession.)



Thomas Lincoln's widowhood was brief. He had scarcely mourned the death of his first wife a year until he reappeared in Kentucky at Elizabethtown in search of another. His admiration had centered for a second time on Sally Bush, the widow of Daniel Johnston, the jailer of Hardin county, who had died several years before of a disease known as the "cold plague." The tradition still kept alive in the Kentucky neighborhood is that Lincoln had been a suitor for the hand of the lady before his marriage to Nancy Hanks, but that she had rejected him for the hand of the more fortunate Johnston. However that may have been, it is certain that he began his campaign in earnest this time and after a brief siege won her heart. "He made a very short courtship," wrote Samuel Haycraft to me in a letter on Dec. 7, 1866. "He came to see her on the 1st of December, 1819, and in a straightforward manner told her that they had known each other from childhood. 'Miss Johnston,' said he, 'I have no wife and you no husband. I came a purpose to marry you. I knowed you from a gal, and you knowed me from a boy. I've no time to lose, and if you're willin let it be done straight off.' She replied that she could not marry him right off, as she had some little debts which she wanted to pay first. He replied, 'Give me a list of them.' He got the list and paid them that evening. Next morning I issued the license, and they were married within 60 yards of my house."

In the eyes of her spouse she could not be regarded as a poor widow. She was the owner of a goodly stock of furniture and household goods, bringing with her among other things a walnut bureau valued at \$50. What effect the new family, their collection of furniture, cooking utensils and comfortable bedding, must have had on the astonished and motherless pair who from the door of Thomas Lincoln's forlorn cabin watched the well filled wagon as it came creaking through the woods can better be imagined than described.

Surely Sarah and Abe, as the stores of supplies were rolled in through the doorless doorways, must have believed that a golden future awaited them. The presence and smile of a motherly face in the cheerless cabin radiated sunshine into every neglected corner. If the Lincoln mansion did not in every respect correspond to the representations made by its owner to the new Mrs. Lincoln before marriage, the latter gave no expression of disappointment or even surprise.

With true womanly courage and zeal she set resolutely to work to make right that which seemed wrong. Her husband was made to put a floor in the cabin, as well as to supply doors and windows. The cracks between the logs were plastered up. A clothespress filled the space between the chimney jam and the wall, and the mat of corn husks and leaves on which the children had slept gave way to the comfortable luxuriance of a feather bed. She washed the two orphans and fitted them out in clothes taken from the stores of her own. The work of renovation in and around the cabin continued until even Thomas Lincoln himself, under the general stimulus of the new wife's presence, caught the inspiration and developed signs of intense activity. The advent of

Sarah Bush was certainly a red letter day for the Lincolns. She was not only industrious and thrifty, but gentle and affectionate, and her newly adopted children, for the first time perhaps, realized the benign influence of a mother's love. Of young Abe she was especially fond, and we have her testimony that her kindness and care for him were warmly and bountifully returned.

The two sets of children in the Lincoln household—to their credit be it said—lived together in perfect accord. Abe was in his tenth year, and his stepmother, awake to the importance of an education, made a way for him to attend school. To her he seemed full of promise, and although not so quick of comprehension as other boys, yet she believed in encouraging his every effort. He had had a few weeks of schooling under Riney and Hazel in Kentucky, but it is hardly probable that he could read. He certainly could not write.

Hazel Dorsey was Abe's first teacher in Indiana. He held forth a mile and a half from the Lincoln farm. The schoolhouse was built of round logs and was just high enough for a man to stand erect under the loft. The floor was of split logs, or what were called puncheons. The chimney was made of poles and clay, and the windows were made by cutting out parts of two logs, placing pieces of split boards a proper distance apart, and over the aperture thus formed pasting pieces of greased paper to admit light.

#### Abraham at School.

"He was always at school early," writes Grigsby, "and attended to his studies. He was always at the head of his class and passed us rapidly in his studies. He lost no time at home, and when he was not at work was at his books. He kept up his studies on Sunday and carried his books with him to work so that he might read when he rested from labor."

Now and then, the family exchequer running low, it would be found necessary for the young rail splitter to stop school and either work with his father on the farm or render like service for the neighbors. These periods of work occurred so often and continued so long that all his school days added together would not make a year in the aggregate. When he attended school, his sister usually accompanied him. "Sally was a quick minded young woman," is the testimony of a schoolmate. She was more industrious than Abe in my opinion. I can hear her good humored laugh now. Like her brother, she could greet you kindly and put you at ease. She was really an intelligent woman.

At Dorsey's school Abe was 10 years old. At the next one, Andrew Crawford's, he was about 14, and at Swaney's he was in his seventeenth year. The last school required a walk of over four miles, and on account of the distance his attendance was not only irregular, but brief. Schoolmaster Crawford introduced a new feature in his school, and we can imagine its effect on his pupils, whose training had been limited to the social requirements of the backwoods settlement. It was instruction in manners. One scholar was required to go outside and re-enter the room as a lady or gentleman would enter a drawing room or parlor. Another scholar would receive the first party at the door and escort him or her about the room,

making polite introductions to each person in the room. How the gaunt and clumsy Abe went through with this performance we shall probably never know. If his awkward movements gave rise to any amusement, his schoolmates never revealed it.

He was now over 6 feet high and was growing at a tremendous rate, for he added two inches more before the close of his seventeenth year, thus reaching the limit of his stature. He weighed in the region of 160 pounds, was wiry, vigorous and strong. His feet and hands were large, arms and legs long and in striking contrast with his slender trunk and small head. "His face was shriveled and yellow," declares one of the girls who attended Crawford's school. "His shoes, when he had any, were low. He wore buckskin breeches, linsey woolsey shirt and a cap made of the skin of a squirrel or coon. His breeches were baggy and lacked by several inches meeting the tops of his shoes, thereby exposing his shinbone—sharp, blue and narrow."

In one branch of school learning he was a great success—that was spelling. We are indebted to Kate Roby, a pretty miss of 15, for an incident which illustrates alike his proficiency in orthography and his natural inclination to help another out of the mire. The word "defied" had been given out by Schoolmaster Crawford, but had been misspelled several times when it came Miss Roby's turn. "Abe stood on the opposite side of the room," related Miss Roby to me in 1865, "and was watching me. I began d-e-f, and then I stopped, hesitating whether to proceed with an 'i' or a 'y.' Looking up, I beheld Abe, with a grin covering his face and pointing with his index finger to his eye. I took the hint, spelled the word with an 'i,' and it went through all right."



In the fall of 1818 the scantily settled region in the vicinity of Pigeon creek, where the Lincolns were then living, suffered a visitation of that dread disease common in the west in early days and known in the vernacular of the frontier as "the milk sick." It hovered like a specter over the Pigeon creek settlement for over ten years, and its fatal visitation and inroads among the Lincolns, Hankses and Sparrows finally drove that contingent into Illinois. To this day the medical profession have never agreed upon any definite cause for the malady, nor have they in all their scientific wrangling determined exactly what the disease itself is.

Early in October of the year 1818 Thomas and Betsy Sparrow fell ill of the disease and died within a few days of each other. Thomas Lincoln performed the services of undertaker. With his whipsaw he cut out the lumber and with commendable promptness nailed together the rudest of coffins to inclose the forms of the dead. The bodies were borne to a scantily cleared knoll in the midst of the forest, and there, without ceremony, quietly let down into the grave. Meanwhile Abe's mother had also fallen a victim to the insidious disease. Her sufferings, however, were destined to be of brief duration. Within a week she, too, rested from her labors.

"She struggled on day by day," says one of the household, "a good Christian woman, and died on the seventh day after she was taken sick. Abe and his sister Sarah waited on their mother and did the little jobs and errands required of them. There was no physician nearer than 35 miles. The mother knew she was going to die and called the children to her bedside. She was very weak, and the children leaned over while she gave her last message. Placing her feeble hand on little Abe's head, she told him to be kind and good to his father and sister. To both she said, 'Be good to one another,' expressing a hope that they might live, as they had been taught by her, to love their kindred and worship God." Amid the miserable surroundings of a home in the wilderness Nancy Hanks passed across the dark river. Though of lowly birth, the victim of poverty and hard usage, she takes a place in history as the mother of a son who liberated a race of men. At her side stands another mother whose Son performed a similar service for all mankind 1,800 years before.

After the death of their mother little Abe and his sister Sarah began a dreary life—indeed one more cheerless and less inviting seldom falls to the lot of any child. In a log cabin without a floor, scantily protected from the severities of the weather, deprived of the comfort of a mother's love, they passed through a winter the most dismal either one ever experienced.



## LINCOLN'S TWO MOTHERS.

### A Brief Sketch of Two Unknown Noble Women.

The expression of sadness which was so noticeable in Lincoln's face is said to have been a direct inheritance from his mother. Previous to his birth she had fallen into a hopeless state of mind, induced by loneliness of heart and long suffering. She was the wife of a man who, if all accounts of him do not lie, was destitute of energy and any sense of responsibility.

It is said that any mention of his mother brought over Lincoln's face an expression of sadness almost approximating anguish. The cause lay deeper than any knowledge he ever gained. It was an ante-natal impress. She was a strangely sad woman. During the later years of her life she became reserved and shrinking, in decided contrast to the joyous sociability of her girlhood. Her maiden name was Nancy Hanks. Dr. Holland said of her: "She had much in her nature that was truly heroic, and much that shrank from the rude life around her."

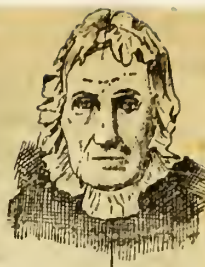
From his father Lincoln inherited his conversational habit and love of anecdote. Thomas Lincoln was brilliant as a store-box whittler and leader of grocery store dialogues. His chief earthly pleasure was to crack jokes and tell stories in a group of chums who paid homage to his wit by giving him the closest attention and loudest applause. "His son possessed this accomplishment," says Laura C. Holloway, in her book entitled "Mothers of Great Men and Women," "but in his case it was indulged in more to mask deep feeling and to avoid unpleasant subjects than for the pleasure the telling of stories gave him. All his life he put barriers between the world and himself through the medium of humor."

Thomas Lincoln was a rolling stone. He changed his residence whenever the mood seized him, a feasible undertaking any time, since his worldly goods were never bulky. He was a carpenter ostensibly, but worked only at hunting. He could scarcely have been greatly addicted to his trade, when the bedsteads in his cabin were made of saplings with the bark on. Nancy Hanks married him on the 23d of September, 1806, and probably regretted it ever after.

In comparison with the people about her Mrs. Lincoln was a learned woman. She could read and write, though her husband could not. She taught her little son to read and write in their scanty cabin, and the few books she possessed were a comfort to her otherwise dismal existence. She died of what was then called the "milk sickness," after a long illness, when Lincoln was 10 years old. How pathetic were those last days when she saw herself fading out of life, leaving her children in pinching poverty to the care of a careless father! Lincoln had a sister named Sally, two years older than himself, who married in her 18th year and died less than a year later. How earnestly she tried to make her son understand that he must set himself some particular task in life and do it well! He could write fairly when she died. A year later he wrote to the minister who had married his parents, requesting him to come and preach his mother's funeral sermon, since there had been no service at the time of her death. Three months later the minister came, and the funeral sermon was preached over her grave in the western wilderness, in the presence of the children, their father and about twenty of the neighbors. To this day no stone marks her resting place.

No words can describe the loneliness and misery of Lincoln's life in the year that followed. In the brightest days of his manhood he could not look back upon that time without agony and humiliation. A few months more than a year after the death of his mother fate blessed him with a stepmother, who was to him mother, friend and companion. She was a widow when Thomas Lincoln married her—Mrs. Sally Johnston—a Kentuckian, with a kind heart and agreeable person. The picture

here represents her in her later life. It is taken by special permission from Mrs. Holloway's book, "Mothers of Great Men and Women," published by Funk & Wagnalls, of New York.



When Lincoln first saw her she

was young, good looking, cheerful and full of energy. From the moment she set foot in the cabin she took a liking to the lonely, motherless boy—a liking which soon ripened into love on both sides and endured until death.

She, too, was one of Thomas Lincoln's victims. He had represented that he was a farmer in comfortable circumstances in Indiana. She found his home a poverty-stricken cabin, his only support an occasional odd job which he did for the thrifty farmers of his neighborhood. She made the best of her unfortunate bargain, and found in the son the

companionship and help which were lacking in the father. Great was her influence upon the lonely life of the future great man. The furniture she brought with her gave the Indiana cabin an air of comfort, and her two daughters and one son brightened it with their childish pleasures. The little family lived affectionately together. Lincoln was devoted to his stepsisters and stepmother, and they were in turn deeply attached to him. In later years, when they were married and had homes of their own, nobody was welcomed more joyfully than "Brother Abe." After his tragic death they often spoke of his affection for their mother and of her's for him.

After Lincoln left home to work for himself he sent her a share of the first money he earned, and as long as she lived he continued to provide for her comfort. When his father died he was unable to attend the funeral on account of illness in his own family. After he was elected president of the United States he went to see his stepmother. Their meeting and parting was most affectionate. They never met in this world again. A

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Broadside



## SALLY BUSH.

### Abraham Lincoln's Stepmother.

A few miles from the Ohio River, in Southern Indiana, in the midst of its grand old forest of towering oaks, of walnut and maple trees, were scattered bits of prairie land that rose and fell in waves of hill and hollow most fair to see.

Upon one of these eminences stood a small, unsightly cabin of rough and unhewn logs, with neither doors or windows. In one corner of the room poles were stuck into the cracks of the logs, while the other ends were supported by forked sticks sunk into the earthen floor. Over these boards were laid, upon which dry leaves were scattered, the whole surmounted with skins of animals, and old clothes. This was the only bedstead visible. Three or four three-legged stools, a slab with the flat side upward serving as a table, and a Dutch oven and skillet completed the furniture of the room.

This was the home of Thomas Lincoln, an easy going, idle man, whose chief excellences lay in his skill as a huntsman and his remarkable aptitude for story-telling.

About a year after the death of his wife, who had left to him two children, he sought another in the person of Sally Bush, who had in earlier years rejected his suit, but who was now a widow, living with her three children in Kentucky.

In homely words, he urged immediate marriage and she yielded. It is fair to presume, however, that had she known the real truth about the Indiana cabin life her consent would have been hard to gain.

Packing up her household goods and loading them on a wagon drawn by four horses, the newly wedded pair arrived at Thomas Lincoln's home. Imagine her disappointment when, at the close of a cold December day, they drove up before the doorless, windowless cabin, in front of which stood the two children, Nancy, a girl of 11, and Abe, a boy 9 years old.

Ill-clad, with unwashed faces and uncombed hair, these little creatures gazed with eyes and mouth wide open at the wonderful treasures unloaded from that wagon.

There were chairs and a table, and knives and forks and cooking utensils, and most marvelous of all a real bureau, that in those days had cost \$40. This last Thomas Lincoln had declared a sinful extravagance, and had urged Sally to sell it, but she would not heed and so it was brought to the backwoods cabin.

To these untutored children, who had never heard of such things, and who knew nothing of their uses, this change of surroundings came, like a perfect revelation, and changed the whole color of their lives.

In person, Sally Bush was tall and stately, handsome in face and figure, with earnest eyes and beautiful curling hair. In conversation she was bright and cheery, and to all her charms added a rare force of character, expressing itself in neatness, energy, economy, and thrift.

Desolate as was her future prospect, unpromising in its every feature, she lost no time in lamentation. Looking calmly into the face of chaos, out of it she wrought comfort and order.

Turning with pity to the two neglected Lincoln children she cleaned them thoroughly and combed and straightened their tangled locks. She taught them how to wash themselves, and gave them untiring lessons in the virtues of cleanliness. From her own wardrobe she fashioned for them garments, and clothed

them comfortably from head to foot. Nice warm beds and nourishing food were provided for them. She treated them as kindly as she did her own children, and took them into the heart of her large and gracious motherhood. Through her insistence, her husband laid a wooden floor and in due time, doors and windows found their proper places. Little by little more land was cultivated and better provisions were made for the entire family.

Instead of blows and hard usage, to which the children had been always subjected, she ruled them by love and by winsome ways. As Abraham Lincoln so often said in after years, "she was the woman who first made me feel like a human being." To him she was the embodiment of all things good—his "saintly mother," his "Angel of a mother," as he used to call her.

Uncultivated she certainly was, as measured by book attainments, or by the accomplishments of these modern times, but she was strong in high purpose, and capable of arousing ambition in others, by her earnest zeal. A short time after she arrived at the Lincoln home, "Abe," to whom she soon became warmly attached, was fitted out in a comfortable suit of clothes, and sent to school for the first time in his life.

It is true, he walked four and a half miles each day for this instruction, which at the best, was meagre, but it was enough to stir desire for more, and fan to living flame the light that was in time to lead this land through darkened places.

Utterly ignorant, rude, and uncouth, the new mother found this boy seemingly destined to a life of rudeness and obscurity, and from these depths, she rescued the pure and honest and forceful spirit, that is to day loved and revered by the whole world.

Through the transformation she brought about in the home and in the entire life of the family, she completely won the boy's confidence, so that he rested entirely upon her wisdom and yielded her, in all things, the most implicit obedience. Did she assume that certain things could be brought about, he never for one moment questioned the result.

Faithful always, through his entire life, to this devoted woman, Abraham Lincoln never forgot her, in the midst of triumphs, whose glory might have dimmed the remembrance of a heart less loyal than his own.

After his election to the Presidency, before he went to Washington, he visited his mother, now bent and bowed with age. It was a sad parting, this last one, for both share in the same foreboding that they should meet no more on earth.

After his assassination, Mr. Herndon, Mr. Lincoln's law partner, went to see her. With streaming eyes, she said: "Abe was a good boy, and I can say what scarcely one woman can say in a thousand, Abe never gave me a cross word, or look, and never refused in fact, or appearance, to do anything I requested him."

"His mind and mine, what little I had, seemed to run together. I had a son John who was raised with Abe."

"Both were good boys, but I must say, both now being dead, that Abe was the best boy I ever saw. I did not want Abe to run for President; did not want him elected; was afraid somehow; and when he came down to see me, after he was elected President, I still felt that something would befall Abe and that I should see him no more."

Our Republic must justly honor its heroes and statesmen, that their example may inspire those coming after to guard the freedom of the future, but shall it not also remember the debt of gratitude it owes to its women-builders—to the patient, tireless, creative force wielded by the mothers of men?

ELLA DARE.



# SARAH BUSH LINCOLN.

## THE FOSTER MOTHER OF THE MARTYRED PRESIDENT.

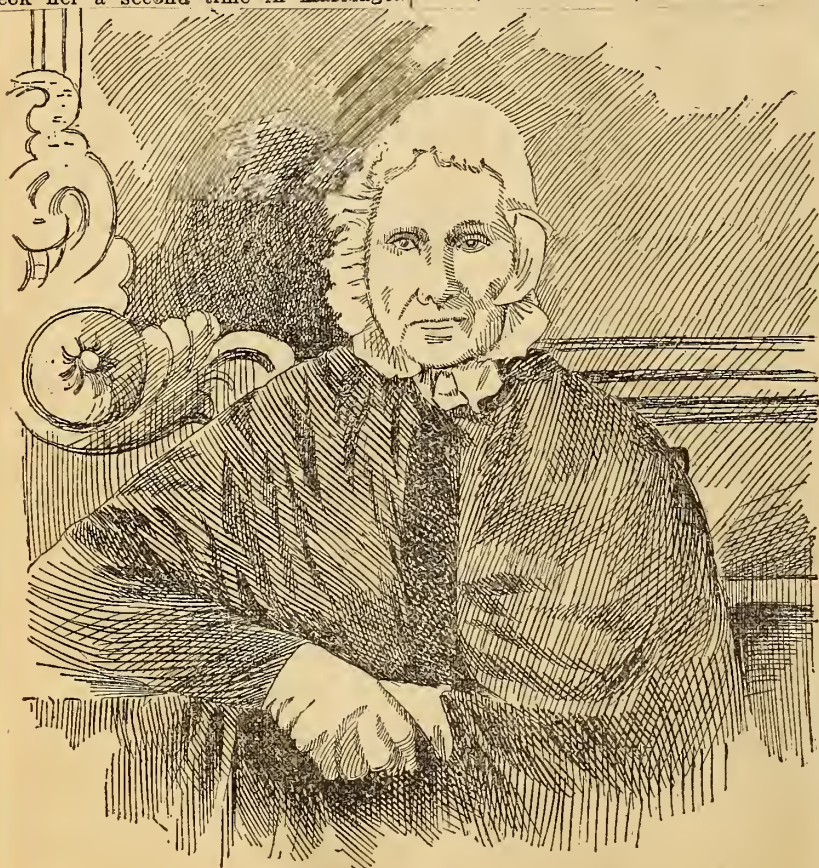
Story of Her Life as Told by Those  
Who Knew Her—Circumstances Under  
Which She Became Tom Lincoln's  
Second Wife.



HE accompanying portrait of Sarah Bush Lincoln is from a portrait in possession of her grand daughter, Mrs. Harriet Chapman of Charlestown, Ill. It was lately printed in half tone in McClure's Magazine,

by special permission of the owner. Sarah Bush was born in Kentucky, December 13, 1788. She was a friend and companion of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, and it is said that Thomas Lincoln asked her first to marry him, but that she preferred Daniel Johnston. Her husband died before Thomas Lincoln lost his wife, in October of 1818. In November, 1819, Thomas Lincoln went to Kentucky to seek her a second time in marriage.

to his aunt, who was then a widow Johnston; she told him that she would be perfectly willing to marry him, as she had known him a long time, and felt that the marriage would be congenial and happy, but it would be impossible for her to even think of marrying and leaving the state, as she was considerably in debt, and could not think of leaving the state while in debt. Uncle Thomas told her that need make no difference, as he had plenty of money and would take care of her financial affairs; and when he had ascertained the amount of her indebtedness and the names of the parties to whom the money was due, he went around and redeemed all her paper and presented it to her, and told her, when she showed so much honor about debts, he was more fully satisfied than ever that she would make him a good wife. She said, as he had displayed so much generosity in her behalf, she was willing then to marry and go with him to Spencer county, Indiana. This second wife of Thomas Lincoln has a vast relationship living in this (Hardin) county, among them the nephew from whom the above was obtained; also a niece, Mrs. M. H. Cofer, whose husband died a few years ago, and was, at the time of his death, chief justice of the supreme court of Kentucky. She has also a nephew, Hon. W. P. D. Bush, at Frankfort, Kentucky; and



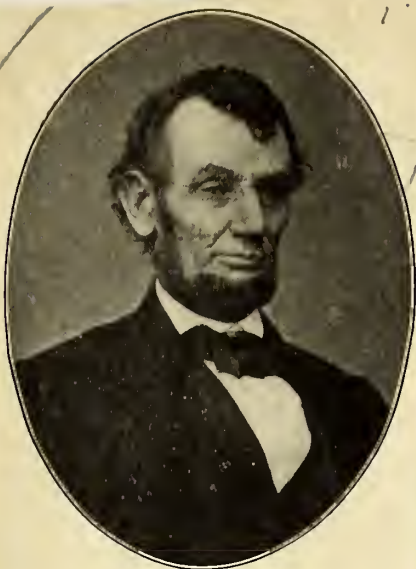
SARAH BUSH LINCOLN.

An incident of the courtship is told in a private letter from Mr. J. L. Nall, a cousin of President Lincoln's: "I have recently spent a few days in Elizabethtown, the old Kentucky home of Uncle Thomas Lincoln. While there I had a long talk with my old friend Hon. S. H. Bush, who is a nephew of President Lincoln's step-mother. He told me that when Uncle Thomas came back after the death of his first wife, Nancy Hanks, and proposed marriage

one, Hon. Robert Bush, at Hawesville, Kentucky. The men rank among the best lawyers in Kentucky." Sarah Bush Lincoln changed the character of the Lincoln home completely when she entered it, and there is no question of the importance of her influence upon the development of her step-son Abraham. She was a woman of great natural dignity and kindness, and highly esteemed by all who knew her. She died on the 10th of April, 1869.



## ABRAHAM LINCOLN



## HIS MOTHERS

By Gertrude Morrison

ONE cannot speak of Lincoln's debt to his mother alone, for Nancy Hanks proved too delicate a flower for the prairies of Indiana, and died while Abraham was too young to keep any definite recollection of her. Yet something vague and indefinite must have lingered, since, some little time after his mother was buried, the nine-year-old lad sent a pathetic note to a parson, as they called ministers in that day and region, asking him to come to "read a sermon" over the grave of his mother. In the scattered prairie settlements of Indiana, many people had to be laid away without this bit of comfort. But that did not seem right to the lad, and he treasured in his mind a longing to have his gentle mother paid every mark of respect and honor. The good man was so touched by the boyish letter that he rode over two hundred miles to conduct, in the presence of the neighbors who gathered in, a simple, sympathetic ceremony over that lowly grave in the wilderness.

Dying two years after the family moved to Indiana, her loving spirit lived on in the boy to whom she had given birth in a log cabin in Kentucky. That cabin was subsequently used as a barn; then, after having been moved some distance, as a slaughter house. The site was about twelve miles from Elizabethtown, the county seat of Hardin County, Kentucky. A log of that little old cabin, never used as a human habitation after the Lincolns moved out, was once sent by express to New York as a relic. I never quite understood that craving for a souvenir of Lincoln until I met, in college, a girl from Illinois, whose mother's choicest possession, one that hangs prominently on the walls of her hall, oddly at variance with

its luxury, is a plain, painted panel cut from an ordinary door. But its carving is more precious to that household than the most exquisite workmanship of the East; neither Japan nor India could wrest with their fretted treasures the honored place accorded that simple pine board; for on it is carved, rudely enough, "just 'A. L.'" The tool was a jack-knife; the hand that carved later signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This rare and unique original is to go down in the family a priceless heirloom, not of a hero, but simply of a beloved friend and neighbor.

Neighbors were neighbors in the training of Lincoln; so much so that when, two years after the death of his wife, Thomas Lincoln thought it well to marry again, he went back to the vicinity of Elizabethtown to look up an old friend and former neighbor, Mrs. Sally Johnston. She made a good, kind, faithful stepmother. In mature life, after he had become president of the United States, Lincoln gave her credit for those principles of integrity which were the guide of his life. She taught him all that he knew about the Bible, and laid the foundations for a man, "plain, but wise, witty, and great."

The character of Mrs. Sally Johnston is perhaps best illustrated by an amusing little account of her courtship that has come down to us. Presumably she was somewhat taken aback on opening her door one morning to find Thomas Lincoln, who she supposed was in Indiana, standing on her threshold, and looking as if he wished to interest her particularly in what he had to say.

"Yes, I remember you very well, Tommy

Lincoln. What has brought you back to old Kentucky?"

"Well, my wife Nancy is dead."

"Why, you don't say so!"

"Yes, she died more than a year ago. I have come back to Kentucky to look for another wife. Do you like me, Mrs. Johnston?"

"Yes, I like you, Tommy Lincoln."

"Do you like me well enough to marry me?"

"Yes, I like you, Tommy Lincoln, and I like you well enough to marry you; but I can't marry you now."

"Why not?"

"Because I am in debt, and I could never think of burdening the man I marry with debt; it would not be right."

Mrs. Johnston handed him a worn little account book whose items ranged from fifty cents all the way to one dollar and twenty-five cents, totaling about twelve dollars. Unobserved, as he talked on, Thomas Lincoln slipped the little book into his pocket. He was back in the afternoon, receipts, or an acknowledging, illiterate "X" exonerating Mrs. Johnston from all further obligation.

"Why, Tommy Lincoln, you have gone and paid off all my debts."

"Yes, and will you marry me now?"

"Yes, I will, Tommy Lincoln."

They were married at nine o'clock the next morning, leaving the following day for Indiana. This story is vouched for by one who was present at the wedding. Little dreamed he, or the ones who were marrying, that, as this woman of high principle shaped the growing boy who waited in the home to which she was going, so must rise or fall, some day, the welfare of a great nation.

276. Bush-Sarah (573). I do not know the family of Sarah Bush Johnston, who married Thomas Lincoln, but know she was a daughter of Christopher Bush, and she had brothers, and the family was of the "German speaking Bushes." There were Bushes in early Kentucky, who were descended from those who came from Germany or Switzerland, and those who were descended from those who came from England. S. J. Conkwright of Winchester and his niece, Miss Bessie Taul Conkwright of the Herald-Post at Louisville, Ky., are of the English speaking Bushes. Capt. Billy Bush, who accompanied Daniel Boone on the wilderness trail, was a brother of an ancestor of theirs. They have many records of their branch of the family. Joseph Bush, who lived in Kentucky in the early days, famous as an artist, was of the German speaking branch of the Bushes. He was, I believe, a grandson of the Philip Bush who kept the tavern in Winchester, Va., where Washington had headquarters, while in charge of the defense of the frontier, during the French and Indian war. There were at least three heads of families by the name of Bush living in the South Branch valley of Virginia, across the Great North mountain from Winchester, where Philip Bush kept tavern in colonial times. There were Lewis and Michael Bush. In 1763 George Bush was sending three of four children to a subscription school, paying for schooling in wheat, and Michael also appears to have children.

There is a tradition that several of the Bushes of this locality went to Kentucky in early settlement, also that of a connection between Sarah Bush Lincoln, and family of Lewis Bush, who had a son John, said to have built a fort at Buchannon, now West Virginia, later went to Kentucky, where he left descendants.

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STEPMOTHER SARAH LINCOLN







